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## THE POPES' NEW ORDER

*The author's thanks are due to the Catholic Truth Society for their courteous permission to quote from the translations of the encyclicals published by them, and also to Monsignor Knox and Canon G. D. Smith, authors of three of the translations quoted.*

# THE POPES' NEW ORDER

A Systematic Summary of the Social  
Encyclicals and Addresses, from Leo XIII  
to Pius XII, by

PHILIP HUGHES

'If then a remedy is desired, let it be sought for in  
a restoration of sound doctrine, from which alone  
the preservation of order and, as a consequence, the  
defence of true liberty can confidently be expected.'

LEO XIII, *Libertas Præstantissimum*.

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TO  
RICHARD O'SULLIVAN, K.C.

MY DEAR RICHARD,

I do not know to whom, more suitably than to yourself, I can offer a book whose whole purpose is to further the study of original texts. For such study is the very life of your great profession; and it is the constant occupation of your own learned leisure, as one devoted, in I suppose equal measure, to St. Thomas Aquinas and to St. Thomas More.

And there ought to be a further suitability about this dedication in that you have been called, and by authority, to a high place in the work known as *The Sword of the Spirit*. For the texts with which this book deals are the authoritative papal application, to the special social circumstances of our time, of that Gospel which is eternal. Here, if anywhere, is that *rhêma Theou* for which St. Paul coined the very phrase *Sword of the Spirit*. Here, in fact, is 'the word of God' for us in matters social, and in all that field where politics touch on morals.

The book will, it is hoped, be an aid to those who need to study the texts: it would be mischievous if it were misunderstood as though it offered itself to the student in place of the texts. These are irreplaceable, and, fortunately, they are readily available in the three volumes published by the Catholic Truth Society; many of them, indeed, can be bought separately for a few pence. Yet experience seems to show that, of the encyclicals of Leo XIII, for example, comparatively few copies have really got into circulation; and that of the later, more elaborate letters of Pius XI, there are more who buy and begin to read than ever finish. Analyses and summaries, such as this book contains, may then be an aid to the many who confess themselves routed at the outset by the very bulk and complexity of the texts. And the book will perhaps be useful to those who find it difficult when studying, shall we say,

*Quadragesimo Anno*, to keep in mind the content of *Rerum Novarum*; or who wish to trace (without making it a labour of research) the development of the popes' direction on a given social subject through these last momentous sixty years. Nor must we ever lose sight of the important fact that these documents are parts of a whole, and that, in a certain sense, some knowledge of the whole is called for if any part is to be studied as it needs.

To your friendship I owe many precious gifts, and not the least of these are associated with that *schola*, so familiar to yourself, where Henry of Bracton, Thomas Aquinas and Thomas More are masters, the *schola* where flourish the Common Law, the Scholastic Philosophy and the traditional Catholic Piety which inspired the founders of these, and which these in turn advanced and adorned. It is a special joy to make my grateful acknowledgement in an offer of a book where I figure but as a collector and an arranger, and where the real writer is the Church. And it is the Church once more instructing the nations, very largely, through the *media* of philosophy and law. All the popes whose letters are here drawn on were doctors *utriusque iuris*, and it will not be a matter of indifference to yourself that the fine juristic spirit of him who was Eugene Pacelli shows so evidently in the solutions of Pope Pius XII. May God, through him and through his word, bring to the world something of that order, deriving from the harmony of the supernatural and the natural, which the great founders of the Canon Law achieved seven hundred years ago, Pius XII's immortal predecessors, Alexander III and Innocent IV.

But it is time I ceased to stand between you and your texts. Here then they are, the saving words of Peter, that Peter of whom almost the last of the Romans wrote—I mean St. Ambrose, whose words I wrest to a use no less warranted than that for which he wrote them—‘Where Peter is there is the Church, and where the Church is there is no death but everlasting life.’

PHILIP HUGHES.

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## THE POPES' NEW ORDER



## CHAPTER I

THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSES OF WORLD UNREST AND THE ONLY REAL SOLUTION: AN ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF THE INAUGURAL ENCYCLICALS OF LEO XIII (*INSCRUTABILI* 21 APRIL 1878), BENEDICT XV (*AD BEATISSIMI* 1 NOVEMBER 1914), PIUS XI (*UBI ARCANO DEI* 23 DECEMBER 1922), AND PIUS XII (*SUMMI PONTIFICATUS* 20 OCTOBER 1939).

### THE ENCYCLICAL *INSCRUTABILI*

*Pope Leo XIII (Vincent Joachim Pecci) was born in 1810 at Carpineto in the Papal States, of a family classed as of the lesser nobility. He began his ecclesiastical career as an official of the civil administration of the Papal States, and was ordained priest in 1837. Promotion came rapidly. He was made Governor of Perugia in 1840, Nuncio to Belgium in 1843, and Bishop of Perugia in 1846. In 1853 he was created Cardinal. During the greater part of the long reign of his predecessor, Pius IX, Cardinal Pecci—who, as nuncio, had earned the ill-will of Metternich—was not in favour at the rather reactionary papal court. His appointment to Perugia was, in fact, a kind of honourable retirement before his time. But he proved himself a model bishop, devising for his diocese many of the practical reforms he later promoted as pope. In a series of masterly pastoral letters he anticipated more than one of his great encyclicals, and during the difficult years of King Victor Emmanuel's occupation of the Papal States, Cardinal Pecci revealed all his genius as a jurist and statesman, never yielding a principle, yet*

*never provoking a conflict. Pius IX, just a year before he died, recalled Pecci to Rome, appointing him to the high place of Camerlengo, one of whose duties is the administration of the Holy See during vacancies. Pius IX died 6 February 1878, and Cardinal Pecci was elected in his place, after a very short conclave—at the second ballot, in fact—on 20 February.*

*Two months later the world was given a clear intimation that with the new pope not a new reign merely had begun, but a new age for the Catholic Church. Since the publication of Count Soderini's official life of Leo XIII we know something of the opposition made to his election by a group of cardinals who were so fearful of the defeat of religion at the hands of the new secular state which the French Revolution had produced, that they refused even to study the enemy's methods, and shrank from any closer or more skilful engagement with the foe than sweeping, general condemnations. The new pope, however, proposed to teach. He was well aware of the abuses of the old state of things and that the hostile anti-Catholic movement in politics and social life was bred, in part, of a determination to better the condition of mankind. Leo XIII's tactic was to show the genuine reformer that he could not succeed without the assistance of the Catholic religion, and to show how, necessarily and from the nature of things, a civilisation which deliberately turns from religion and secularises itself must in the end perish. The pope reasons patiently; his language is carefully inoffensive; at every turn whoever reads must be conscious that the pope is second to none in his concern for the future of civilisation; nowhere does he denounce men, and when he condemns false and mischievous theories (and this Leo XIII does as unhesitatingly as did ever Pius IX or Gregory XVI) it is always with such an explanation that the condemnation is seen as reasonable.*

*All papal documents—bulls, briefs, allocutions, encyclicals and the rest—bear as the title by which they are cited the word or words with which they begin. This inaugural pronouncement of Leo XIII opens with a reference to the unsearchable*

wisdom of God which has called him to be pope '*Inscrutabili Dei consilio ad Apostolicæ dignitatis fastidium licet immerentes evecti . . .*': whence its title *Inscrutabili*. There is moreover for most encyclicals an explanatory, official sub-title; in this case it is *The Ills of Human Society, their Causes and the Remedies for them*. The Latin text of Leo XIII's encyclicals can be found most easily in the collection *Actes de Léon XIII*.<sup>1</sup> The English translation followed here is that of the volume called *The Pope and the People*, published by the Catholic Truth Society.<sup>2</sup> The titles given in these translations to the various encyclicals are usually those of the Latin text. Where there is a difference, it is noted.

As a kind of preface to the summary of the encyclical, and to show the argument at a glance, the reader is offered an analysis of its contents.

I. TABLEAU OF WORLD CONDITIONS, 1878. Seven main evils of the day; their main source the world's rejection of Catholicism; eight effects of the present war against the Church. The new pope's policy: not to lament merely, but to act.

II. THE ROLE OF CATHOLICISM. The Catholic Church the mother of true progress. The pope, then, bound—for the sake of civilisation—to maintain his authority and to preserve his independence. Rulers ought gladly to accept this offer of the Church's aid, and to co-operate by giving the Church full freedom of action.

III. THREE FUNDAMENTAL CATHOLIC DUTIES. i. Loyalty to Rome. ii. Loyalty to the ideal of religious education. iii. Loyalty to the Catholic ideals of marriage and family life.

CONCLUSION. A call to prayer. A reminder; viz., Catholicism alone can save the world from the ruin that threatens.

<sup>1</sup> Seven volumes: published by La Bonne Presse, 5 Rue Bayard, Paris.

<sup>2</sup> 38-40 Eccleston Square, London, S.W.1: op. cit., pp. 1-11, for *Inscrutabili*.

## I. TABLEAU OF WORLD CONDITIONS, 1878

LEO XIII begins his encyclical with a summary description of the chief evils which afflict mankind.

As the new pope sees them these evils are—the subversion of those primary truths which are the very foundations of human society; a general obstinacy of mind impatient of all authority; endless disagreement, whose issue must be war and revolution; a general contempt of law as such; an insatiable craving for things perishable and neglect of things eternal, whence an increase in the number of suicides; the mismanagement, waste and theft of public money; and shameless treason to the State on the part of those in high places.

The chief source of all these evils is the rejection of the authority of the Church, and it is the first care of the enemies of public order to do all in their power to destroy the Church's authority and to weaken the influence of the pope. One great means to this end is calumny and, especially, the charge that the Church is opposed to genuine progress.

Among the effects of this attack on the Church the following are especially to be noted:

Laws that shake the very structure of the Church, enacted in more than one country.

Contempt of the authority of the bishops.

Obstacles put in the way of men fulfilling their religious duties.

Dissolution of religious orders.

Confiscation of Church property.

Suppression of Catholic charitable institutions.

Licence to all and sundry to teach and propagate principles that are mischievous, with, at the same time, restrictions on the Church's rights to train and educate youth.

The seizing of the temporal power of the popes, consummated by the Italian capture of Rome in 1870.

Leo XIII does not intend merely to lament 'this deadly mass of ills,'<sup>1</sup> but recalls them in order to insist that he intends, more energetically than ever, (*a*) to protect the Church's rights, (*b*) to assert its claims.

## II. THE ROLE OF CATHOLICISM

The pope begins the positive teaching of this first encyclical by a bold declaration that the Church is the great promoter of all that we call civilisation; and he gives utterance to what is to be the dominant note of all his activity as pope for the next twenty-five years, when he declares that 'the Church of Christ, far from being alien to, or neglectful of, progress, has a just claim to all men's praise as its nurse, its mistress, and its mother.' From this it follows—and this pope will never cease to recall it to the attention of all Catholics—that the Church must retain its contact with the world, for to act in the world, and upon the world is the very purpose of the Church's existence.

The pope's argument takes this line. 'Civilisation is a fiction of the brain' unless it is based on truth, virtue and justice. Who will deny the service of the Church in bringing truth to the peoples sunk in ignorance or superstition? Or its service in the abolition of slavery and the restoration of man to his original dignity as a human being? Or its care for the sciences and the arts, for education and for works of charity? If we compare the ages when the Church was universally revered as a mother with our own age, is it not 'beyond all question that our age is rushing wildly along the straight road to destruction'? Again, if we compare the civilisation of peoples who have accepted the Church's ideals, with that of those 'on whom the Gospel light has never shone,' we see at once the benefit of the Church to civilisation and progress.

Nor can anyone deny the role of the popes throughout history as protectors and guardians of civilisation. 'It is in very truth the glory of the Supreme Pontiffs, that they steadfastly

<sup>1</sup> All quotations in the summaries are from the encyclical summarised, unless otherwise noted.

set themselves as a wall and bulwark to save human society from falling back into its former superstition and barbarism.' If only 'their healing authority' had not been set aside! How many revolutions, wars, civil and social catastrophes, would the world not have been spared! For then the civil power would not have lost 'that venerable and sacred glory, the lustrous gift of religion, which alone renders the state of subjection noble and worthy of man.'

Since the papacy has been a source of so much good to mankind, the pope owes it to mankind to preserve the dignity of the papacy safe and sound. Wherefore the pope pledges himself never to cease to strive (1) that his authority may receive the recognition which is its due; (2) that the obstacles be removed which hamper its free exercise; (3) that there may be restored to him that civil sovereignty which is essential for the protection and the preservation of his full liberty of action as spiritual power.

Hence Leo XIII renews all the protestations of his predecessor, Pius IX, against Italy's spoliation of the Papal States: he appeals to all princes and rulers, not to refuse the Church's valuable aid 'proffered them in a season of such need'; on the contrary, to unite themselves more closely with authority that is the source of so much good for states. And since 'their own peace and safety, as well as those of the people, are bound up with the safety of the Church and the reverence due to her,' he appeals to rulers to use their utmost to lessen 'the evils by which the Church and its visible Head are harassed.'

### III. THREE FUNDAMENTAL CATHOLIC DUTIES

The pope turns next to the consideration of the fundamental matters that concern men not as grouped in the political societies called states, but as individual souls. These are their duty of submission to the teaching of the Holy See; the importance of an education that is Catholic; and their duty to observe God's law in what relates to marriage and the family.

**LOYALTY TO ROME.** It is an obvious conclusion from all that the pope has said about the role of the Church, and its Head, in the moral education of mankind, that Catholics, above all, should be familiar with, and loyal to, the teaching of the Holy See. The pope appeals to the bishops to kindle the fire of the love of religion among their people 'that their attachment to his chair of truth and justice may become closer and firmer, that they may welcome all its teachings with thorough assent of mind and will,' wholly rejecting whatever they know to be contrary to the Church's doctrine. So it will come about that the faithful brought to thorough agreement in the like feeling and the same belief, may think and speak even as Our-elves.'

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.** The teachings of the Catholic Faith should be implanted early. Not only should there be 'a suitable and solid method of education . . . but above all . . . this education should be wholly in harmony with the Catholic Faith in its literature and system of training, and chiefly in philosophy, upon which the foundation of the other sciences in measure depends.'

**CATHOLIC IDEAL OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE.** The important part of the training of youth, however, is that which is given in the home, 'family Christian training' the pope calls it. This training is impossible where the laws established by Christ and His Lord in the Church are ignored. In the first place, if children are to receive a Christian training, the parents must have received the sacrament of matrimony, for this is the source of those special graces that are necessary for parent and for child alike, 'so that, by the discharge of their duties to God and to each other, they may with greater ease attain to happiness both in this life and in eternity.' Too often, nowadays, 'citizens make use of legalised concubinage in place of marriage. Lacking, thereby, the aids of the matrimonial graces, husband and wife neglect their bounden duty to each other, children refuse their parents due obedience and reverence and,

not infrequently—'the worst scandal and of all the most ruinous to public morality'—an unholy passion arises that ends in a disastrous separation. And, it is on the welfare of families that the welfare of states is founded.

The encyclical concludes with a strong appeal for prayers and a renewed reminder that, since 'great indeed and beyond the strength of man are these objects of Our hopes and prayers,' only in obedience to the divinely guided Church and its Head can the nations find health and prosperity, deliverance from the many evils and visitations that afflict them.

### THE ENCYCLICAL AD BEATISSIMI <sup>1</sup>

*Pope Benedict XV (James della Chiesa) was born at Genoa in 1854, the son of the Marquis della Chiesa. He studied law at the state university of Genoa and then theology at the Gregorian University of Rome. He was ordained priest in 1878 and given a place in the office of the Cardinal Secretary of State. In 1884 he went to Spain as one of the secretaries of the new nuncio, Rampolla, and on the nuncio's promotion to be Cardinal Secretary of State, in 1887, della Chiesa returned with him to Rome to serve as one of his staff. For the next twenty years he filled a succession of important posts in the office of the Secretary of State, first under Rampolla and then under Rampolla's successor, Merry del Val. In 1907 Mgr della Chiesa was appointed Archbishop of Bologna by Pius X (who himself consecrated him<sup>2</sup>) and in 1914 created Cardinal. That same year—barely one hundred days after his creation as cardinal—della Chiesa was elected pope.*

*When Benedict XV was elected, the World War of 1914–1918 was just seven weeks old. All the horrors that Leo XIII*

<sup>1</sup> The Latin text of Benedict XV's encyclicals is published by La Bonne Presse of Paris, *Actes de Benoît XV*, three volumes: for the English translation used here cf. *The Pope and the People*, pp. 202–217.

<sup>2</sup> As, in 1917, Mgr della Chiesa (then Pope Benedict XV) consecrated Mgr Eugene Pacelli, who is now Pope Pius XII.

*had foreseen, against which he had done so much to warn and protect civilisation, were now unleashed. Inevitably the war was to dominate the whole short reign of Benedict XV (1914-1922), the disciple and intimate of the closest of all Leo's own chosen servants, the Cardinal Rampolla del Tindaro. Inevitably it is the war which dominates in this inaugural encyclical. Examination shows it as a very simply constructed piece: here are its main divisions.*

### **I. THE POPE'S ANXIETY IS FOR ALL MANKIND.**

**II. ANALYSIS OF THE GENERAL UNREST.** *There are four main causes: Mutual love is no longer a factor in human relations: There is a General Contempt for the idea that man should be submissive to authority: Relations between the Social Classes are dominated by Injustice: the Universal Fever to amass riches.*

### **III. CURRENT UNREST AMONG CATHOLICS: THE NEW POPE'S COMMANDS.**

#### **I. THE POPE'S ANXIETY FOR ALL MANKIND**

BENEDICT XV begins by declaring that he regards, not only Catholics, but the whole human race as having a claim on his affection and indeed on his life. While Our Lord said to Peter 'Feed My lambs, feed My sheep,'<sup>1</sup> He also said, 'Other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice';<sup>2</sup> and the pope makes his own the prayer of Our Lord for all, 'Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given me.'<sup>3</sup>

The war cannot but take first place in the pope's mind, and in the opening pages of the encyclical he lists a vivid catalogue of the horrors now beginning, and begs the rulers of the several warring nations, even now, to listen to his appeal for a peaceful settlement: 'Surely there are other ways and means whereby

<sup>1</sup> John xxi, 15-17.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. x, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. xvii, 11.

violated rights can be rectified. Let them be tried honestly and with good will, and let arms meanwhile be laid aside.'

Where do the roots of this present awful war really lie? Here, says the pope, we touch on an evil that is greater than even the war itself, a dreadful source whence must come still further catastrophes. This great evil is that 'the precepts and practices of Christian wisdom have ceased to be observed in the ruling of states.' These precepts and practices are the very foundation of peace and stability. Ruin is inevitable once they begin to be ignored. Christian ideals have disappeared, morals with them. Unless God works a change in men's spirit, civilisation must disappear too.

There are four headings under which the pope will describe the causes of the serious unrest that now pervades the whole human race. These are, the disappearance of mutual love as an element in the relations of men with one another; contempt for the idea that man should be submissive to authority; the relations between the various social classes are dominated by Injustice; the universal fever to amass riches.

The encyclical then considers each of these points in detail.

## II. ANALYSIS OF THE GENERAL UNREST

MUTUAL LOVE NO LONGER ACTIVE IN HUMAN RELATIONS. It was to establish a kingdom based on brotherly love that Our Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven. To bring men to mutual love was His own chosen office and aim. He uses every kind of argument to convince men, 'He teaches them all, without distinction of nationality or of language or of ideas, to pray in the words *Our Father*.' 'He bids us be brothers, and calls us His brethren.' In the very meanest of mankind we are to recognise His own very self, and it was upon us all that, from the cross, He poured out His saving blood.

What a contrast between this teaching and men's conduct to-day! There is no topic on which men are so eloquent, to-

day, as 'the brotherhood of man,' and almost everywhere the movement towards this brotherhood is spoken of as though it were one of the greatest gifts of 'modern civilisation.' But such 'brotherhood of man' as has ever existed has been rather the outcome of the Gospel, something due to the work of Our Lord and His Church. And, in actual fact, there was never less brotherhood among men than at the present moment (1914). We have only to observe the facts, race hatred between nations, class hatred inside every nation, and self-love as the supreme law with individuals, over-ruling everything else.

The pope gives a serious warning. No merely human philanthropy, no matter how noble and praiseworthy its achievements, can take the place of, or do the work of that charity of which Jesus Christ is the source. If these human institutions do not 'contribute to stimulate in men's hearts true love of God and of our neighbours' they will confer no lasting advantage, 'they are of no real value, for he that loveth not, abideth in death.'<sup>1</sup>

CONTEMPT FOR THE IDEA OF RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY. There is no longer any general respect for the authority which rulers exercise. The bonds of duty which should link the subject to whoever has authority over him are now so weak that they scarcely exist at all, and this is due in the first place to the new modern teaching about the origin of authority. For it is taught nowadays that the source of authority's power is the freewill of men, and not God, the Creator and Ruler of the human race.

It is from this notion of man as the source of authority and this refusal to acknowledge man's subordination to God, that there has come that unrestrained striving for independence and that over-weening pride which have gradually penetrated all human life. The home, too, is a victim to this new spirit and even in clerical life the same vices are apparent. Whence there is a general contempt for laws, insubordination of subjects,

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv, 7.

wanton criticism of orders, a varied and extensive undermining of authority—and crimes against property and life on the part of many who claim that no law whatever binds them.

The pope's duty in the face of all this is plain. 'It would not be right for Us, to whom is divinely committed the teaching of the truth, to keep silence. We remind the peoples of the earth of that doctrine which no human opinions can change, namely that "There is no power but from God: and the powers that be are ordained by God."'<sup>1</sup> It is from God that all authority comes, and authority is to be obeyed, not in any kind of way, but religiously, that is to say as a matter of conscience. 'Be subject of necessity, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake.'<sup>2</sup> The only exception to this obligation to obey is when the commands given are against the laws of God. Otherwise 'he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation.'<sup>3</sup>

Is it not folly, or worse, for rulers to ignore this truth, and to separate themselves from the holy religion of Jesus Christ which, ever insisting on such truths, would give them such strength and support? Is it really political wisdom to rule a country without any reference to the teaching of the Gospel and the Church, or to educate its youth apart from that same teaching?

'Sad experience proves that human authority fails when religion is set aside.' As with man, so with nations. The rulers despise God's authority and the people come to despise the ruler. The will turns from God, and it becomes the slave of passion. There always remains, for the ruler—so it is urged—the expedient of force. True, but of what avail is this, ultimately? 'Force can repress the body: it cannot repress men's souls.'

CLASS RELATIONS ARE DOMINATED BY INJUSTICE. Human society holds together peacefully for a double reason; its mem-

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xiii, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. xiii, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. xiii, 2.

bers are united to each other by mutual love, and, next, they are united to their head by a dutiful acknowledgement of his authority over all.

Both these sources of peace have in our time been terribly weakened. The result is that, within the nation, the population is 'divided, as it were, into two hostile armies, bitterly and ceaselessly at strife, the owners on the one hand and the proletariat and the workers on the other.'

A proletariat that is filled with hatred and envy of the wealthy because the wealthy are wealthy, is ready material for the fallacies of the agitator. Once these fallacies are accepted, it is all but impossible to show those whom they deceive that 'it does not follow that, because men are equal by their nature, they must all occupy an equal place in the community'; nor will such victims of fallacy readily admit that each man's position is what, by the use of his natural gifts, each man makes it—though, of course, the force of circumstances may prevent the fruition of a man's natural gifts. If the poor rise against the rich simply as though the rich were thieves, they act unjustly and uncharitably and also they act unreasonably. If they chose, could they not, themselves, improve their own fortune by honest industry?

The consequences of class hatred are as obvious as they are disastrous, and the pope especially singles out to be deplored the frequent strikes that disorganise the national life and the riots that often accompany them.

The errors of Socialism have been already exposed by Leo XIII; bishops will doubtless see that the grave precepts of his various social encyclicals are never forgotten, and will see to it that 'in Catholic associations and congresses, in sermons and in the Catholic press' they are, when the need arises, clearly explained. Benedict XV does not intend to repeat here the arguments of Leo XIII: he is more especially concerned to preach the divine law that all men should love each other with brotherly love. Brotherly love will not indeed abolish 'the difference of conditions and therefore of classes . . . but it will bring it

to pass that those who occupy higher positions will in some way bring themselves down to those in a lower position, and treat them not only justly . . . but kindly and in a friendly and patient spirit. The poor, on their side, will rejoice in their prosperity, and rely confidently on their help—even as the younger son of a family relies on the help and protection of his elder brother.'

THE UNIVERSAL FEVER TO AMASS RICHES.<sup>1</sup> There is a still deeper root that must be extirpated before mankind can enjoy any really stable peace. As St. Paul writes to Timothy, 'The desire of money is the root of all evils.'<sup>2</sup>

Once men have lost all belief in a future life, and have come to consider this earthly life as the whole reason of their existence, it is no wonder that, in their instinctive toil to be happy, they break down ruthlessly whatever stands in their way.

Godless schools, an evil press, and many other influences are responsible for the spread of this 'most pernicious error' that there is no other happiness but in the present life.

Those who fall victims to this error must have wealth. But wealth is not equally divided, and the State sets limits to the taking of other men's wealth. Whence, on the part of the less fortunate, a new hatred of the State.

'Thus the struggle of one class of citizen against another bursts forth, the one trying by every means to obtain and to take what they want to have, the other endeavouring to hold and to increase what they already possess.'

All this Our Lord foresaw, and He made provision against it in the divine philosophy of the Sermon on the Mount, teaching there what are the real 'beatitudes' of man. The goods of this mortal life, so He teaches us, are not the ultimate, real good.

<sup>1</sup> J. A. Spender, describing 'the atmosphere of these years' 1904-1914, is to the point here when he speaks of 'a certain grandiosity invading the thought and the action of all the nations. All records were being broken in the race for material wealth: everywhere the demand was for the unparalleled and the colossal. . . . The prevailing spirit infected governments and their advisors.' (*Fifty Years of Europe*, 2nd ed., 1936, p. 237.)

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. vi, 10.

None of them bring to any man the fullness of happiness. 'So far indeed are riches and glory and pleasure from bringing happiness to man, that if he really wishes to be happy he must rather for God's sake renounce them all: "Blessed are ye poor . . . Blessed are ye that weep now. . . . Blessed shall you be when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you, and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil."'<sup>1</sup> . . . It is through the sorrows and sufferings and miseries of this life, patiently borne, as it is right they should be borne, that we shall enter into possession of those true and imperishable goods which "God hath prepared for them that love Him."'<sup>2</sup>

This is a most important truth of faith—overlooked by many, forgotten completely by not a few. We must strive by every manner of means to revive the knowledge of it amongst men, and in proportion as this revives we can look for a 'decrease of that feverish striving after the empty goods of this world.' So, with an increase of brotherly love, will social unrest and strife cease from the earth.

### III. THE CURRENT UNREST AMONG CATHOLICS: THE NEW POPE'S COMMANDS

The encyclical now turns to other topics: an acknowledgment of the great work of the late pope, Pius X; an authoritative direction about current controversies among Catholics; an appeal for loyal obedience to the bishops; and a formal protest against the restriction of the pope's freedom of action that was a consequence of the Italian Government's destruction of his temporal power and of its refusal to acknowledge his sovereign status.

### THE ENCYCLICAL UBI ARCANO DEI

*Pope Pius XI (Achilles Ratti), born at Desio, near Milan, in 1857, came of a family that for generations had been farmers*

<sup>1</sup> Luke vi, 20.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ii, 9.

and silk weavers in Lombardy. His scholastic career was brilliant, and after his return from Rome (where he was ordained priest in 1879) he first taught for six years in the Milan Seminary and then, for twenty-four years, he served the Ambrosian Library as one of its college of doctors and finally as Prefect. In 1914 he was made Prefect of the Vatican Library and in 1918 Benedict XV sent him to Poland as Apostolic Visitor, to report generally on the ecclesiastical situation. In 1919 Mgr Ratti was named nuncio to the new Polish Republic and consecrated bishop. In June 1921 he was created Cardinal and named Archbishop of Milan. Benedict XV died 22 January 1922 and Cardinal Ratti was elected in his place 6 February following.

In the English translation <sup>1</sup> this inaugural is called, *On the Troubles left by the European War, 1914-1918—Their Causes and Remedies*. But the Latin text bears the firmer and more essential title *De pace Christi in regno Christi quærenda*, which we may render *The Peace of Christ is to be sought through the Reign of Christ*.

Between the election of Pius XI and the appearance of his first encyclical <sup>2</sup> the unusually long period of eleven months elapsed, and this explains the unusual way in which the letter opens, with a résumé of the activities of the new pope's first year in office. This letter's value as a survey of war's moral destructiveness is still greater if it is read with Benedict XV's letter *Pacem*.<sup>3</sup> Here are forebodings that the Versailles treaties will not bring peace: Pius XI's letter shows the fears realised: *An analysis follows*:

## I. PIUS XI'S FIRST MONTHS AS POPE.

II. THE EFFECTS OF THE WAR OF 1914-1918. *No-where is there peace: between states, within states, within family life; the general moral disorder; the ever wider gap that sep-*

<sup>1</sup> *The Pope and the People*, pp. 231-253.

<sup>2</sup> 23 Dec., 1922.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *infra*, p. 275.

arates the wealthy and the needy; life, generally, is at a standstill; religious losses.

### III. THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF THE UNREST.

*'All these things come from within.'*<sup>1</sup> The root of it all is the chronic desire for pleasure, gain and domination over others. The chief cause is the world's apostasy from God, e.g. God banished now from public affairs, from marriage, from education. What wonder if, in a soil so prepared, the war sowed hates that still endure?

IV. THE ONLY WAY TO PEACE. This is through sharing in 'the peace of Christ'—which is a work of charity even more than of justice. With Christian peace is bound up the restoration of all the rights of human personality, of the prestige of law, of the respect due to authority. These, and other fundamental elements of public security, have a basis and support in those doctrines to reveal which God became man. For the propagation of those doctrines He founded the infallible teaching Church. The Catholic Church is the most powerful, the indispensable means to attain to the peace of Christ.

There is no other way to obtain the peace of Christ but this of submitting to the rule of Christ, or the kingship of Christ; explanation of this, the leading idea of Pius XI's whole pontificate; a warning to those Catholics who try to combine a profession of Catholicism with a disregard in practice of this kingship of Christ.

#### I. PIUS XI'S FIRST MONTHS AS POPE

THE pope begins by saying why this encyclical has been so long delayed. He explains that matters of pressing urgency have taken up his time; such, for example, was the problem of the Church's rights in the Holy Places, that have now passed from the jurisdiction of Turkey to that of Great Britain, and again his duty of intervening, to the best of his power, in the

<sup>1</sup> Mark vii, 23.

successive conferences of the victor states, in order to urge the rights of spiritual interests. Again, there was the task of organising and administering relief to the innumerable peoples desolated by the post-war famines, and finally there was the chronic disorder that seemed to threaten the very existence of Italy. Other important events, in this intervening eleven months, though of a happier kind, have made no less urgent demands on the pope's time; such, for example, was the twenty-sixth international Eucharistic Congress held (this year) at Rome, the third centenary of the founding of the great missionary congregation called *De Propaganda Fide* and the festivities that accompanied the restoration of the sanctuary of Our Lady at Loreto. These festivities had the advantage also that they brought to Rome in recent months more bishops than usually come in as many years, and with them 'hosts of the faithful, selected representatives' from every part of the world. And thanks to this unusual opportunity the pope has come to learn little by little, what is to be the chief work to which he must devote himself, and what must be the subject of his first encyclical. 'No one can fail to see,' he says, 'that neither to individuals nor to society, nor to the peoples has true peace come after the disastrous war; the fruitful tranquillity for which all long is still to seek.' Here, in these words, is the key to the letter, for Pius XI proposes to study in the letter the reasons for this present unhappy state of things, the extent of the uneasiness that prevails and its real meaning.

The encyclical falls into three parts: (1) a description of the world as the war of 1914-1918 has left it; (2) a summary analysis of the underlying causes of this present terrible state of Europe, and (3) the pope's message how the longed-for peace may really be found.

## II. EFFECTS OF THE WAR OF 1914-1918

The pope notes that the Near East seems once again on the brink of war, and that famine and plague—the legacy of the

recent war—are still destroying great numbers, especially of old people, of women and of children. In Europe itself the old hatreds are still alive, although the war is over. They find scope now in political manœuvres, and in the secret juggling with the money exchange;<sup>1</sup> they can be seen more openly active in the public press, and even in what should be altogether free from such influences, in the world of studies, of the arts and of letters. The rivalry is, in fact, so intense and so continuous that the people of the world can scarcely breathe for it.

Moreover this bitter hostility not only divides the victor nations from the conquered: it now divides the victors themselves, 'the lesser powers among them complaining that they are overborne and ill treated by the greater, while the greater powers reply that the others are full of hate and treachery.'

Even states which had no part in the war are suffering its dire effects.

This menacing situation has been worsened by the failure of successive international conferences to bring about any improvement. The failure has further embittered men's minds and even bred a kind of despair about the future. Because of this, and of the fear of wars to come—a fear that is now chronic—all states feel bound to live, 'as it were, on a war footing.' All are re-arming 'and not only are the finances of the State exhausted, but the very strength of the race, while care for learning, religious life, and good morals fall into great confusion.'<sup>2</sup>

The pope next considers the internal state of the different countries. Everywhere there are domestic conflicts of alarming bitterness. There is the 'class warfare,' which poisons every activity of national life, and the familiar story everywhere of greed on the one side, envy on the other, of a common desire

<sup>1</sup> 'Scitis . . . veteres . . . simulates . . . exerceri vel dissimulanter in politicis, vel tecte in rei nummarie varietatibus': the English translation (*Pope and People*, p. 234), 'financial affairs' is too vague.

<sup>2</sup> The English translation (op. cit., 234) says: 'The study of doctrine, the habit of religion and the moral life of the peoples are ruined'; the Latin reads: 'tum etiam et doctrinae studia et religionis consuetudo et morum disciplina perturbantur.'

to hold and to dominate, thence strikes and lock-outs, riots, repression, and loss and injury for the whole people.

There is, in political life, the factious opposition of parties really seeking, not the public good, but their own profit at the public expense. Plots and murderous assaults, even on the ministers who actually are rulers, rebellion and like disorders often follow; and the more democratic is the constitution the more mischievous all this is to the national welfare. The Church makes no discrimination between forms of government as such, but it is obvious that the democratic state easily suffers from the treacherous interplay of faction.

But the contemporary discontent has penetrated still more intimately into human life; it affects the family too, which is the very heart of civilisation. Family life, already greatly weakened by various modern tendencies, before the war began, has suffered much from the long and continued absence on war service of so many fathers of families, and from the manifold corruption of morals that the war has brought in its train. The authority of the father, the claims of kinship, have lost much of their force; servants and masters are, by the fact, enemies; only too often the faithfulness of husband and wife has disappeared, and the sacred duties of marriage, duties to God and to Society, have been abandoned altogether.

All this mass of evil comes, originally, from man's own ill-will and, in turn, it makes still more difficult the struggle of each individual with his own weaknesses. All can see how widely spread, among men of every age and condition, are restlessness of mind, bitterness and a morbid touchiness. To obey is felt, generally, as submission to a heavy yoke, and there is a general unwillingness to work. Among women and girls there is a levity that takes them far beyond the bounds of decency in their dress and in dances, and their new extravagance in self-adornment breeds new hatred in the multitude of the needy. And this multitude grows daily in number, to be a never-failing reserve whence the revolution will recruit new armies.

The total result—in a word—is that life generally is brought

to a standstill. 'Industry is ruined; commerce is suffocated; literature and the arts are dying'; and, worse than all else, the habit of life which can be called really Christian has so largely disappeared in many places that mankind, far from advancing towards the height of its perfection, seems rather to be returning to savagery and barbarism.

And it is in such a time as this that, to crown all the rest, we have to note and to lament the immense direct damage done by the war to religion itself. Churches have disappeared, seminaries too. Many priests and clerics have been killed; 'others, forgetting discipline, have been turned from their vocation, by the very horror of the war itself.' In far too many places, therefore, 'that preaching of the divine word which is absolutely necessary for the building up of the body of Christ' <sup>1</sup> has altogether ceased. The foreign missions, too, are suffering. Many of the priests engaged in them were called away to the work of war; few have returned safe and sound. It is of course true that the readiness of the clergy to face the obligations laid on them by the State, and their heroic devotion to duty, have done much to lessen anti-clerical prejudice, and to bring back to God many who had strayed. 'But in this we must see and praise the goodness and wisdom of God, who alone can bring good out of evil itself.'

### III. THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF THE UNREST

Our Lord's own words supply the clue to the mystery, 'All these evil things come from within.' <sup>2</sup>

'Peace was indeed signed,' says the pope, 'between the beligerent nations, but it was a peace written in public documents and not in the hearts of men; in men's hearts the spirit of war still reigns.' The habit of ill-will has, in fact, become second nature to many and man 'no longer seems to be a brother to his fellow man, as Christ Our Lord commanded, but a stranger and an enemy.'

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Mark vii, 23.

And the sole motive of all the struggle is to get possession of the perishable goods of this life. Material goods, sought in this unrestrained way, necessarily bring with them every sort of evil. They cannot satisfy the human heart, for this was made for God. They are limited in amount, and cannot therefore satisfy all men equally. Whence, among those whose sole aim is to possess such goods, discontent and envy are inevitable. 'From whence are wars and contentions among you,' says St. James. 'Are they not hence from your concupiscences?'

<sup>1</sup>

No worse plague, in fact, can afflict states or families than this unrestrained desire; desire for pleasure, desire for gain, and the desire to dominate others.

It is from this intemperate desire, masking itself as concern for the public welfare or as patriotism, that all international enmity really comes. 'For this very love of country and of race, which when ruled by the law of Christ has no equal in its power to inspire acts of heroism, becomes nevertheless the source of manifold injustice and wickedness, when, overstepping the limits of what is just and equitable, it turns to an exaggerated nationalism.'

<sup>2</sup>

Terrible is the end of those who fall victims to such an aberration. For they straightway forget not only that all the nations are brothers, 'being parts of the universal human family,' and that other nations besides their own have a right to live and to aspire also to prosperity, but they forget, too, that it is never lawful, nor does it pay, 'to separate what is profitable from what is right.' 'Justice exalteth a nation,' says Holy Scripture, 'but sin maketh nations miserable.'

<sup>3</sup>

If peace, to-day so much desired, still fails to bless us, we must, to understand our plight, push still further our investigation into causes.

<sup>4</sup>

For example, we must realise that long before the war [of

<sup>1</sup> James iv, 1.

<sup>2</sup> This sentence the English translation of the encyclical omits.

<sup>3</sup> Proverbs xiv, 34.

<sup>4</sup> 'id altius etiam quam adhuc fecimus repetendum est'; the English translation says [this] 'must be said again and even emphasised.'

1914-1918] broke out, the principal cause of all this trouble was already active,<sup>1</sup> alike in the individual lives of men and in the corporate action of states. What this cause was, let the words of Holy Scripture tell: 'They that have forsaken the Lord shall be consumed,'<sup>2</sup> or again Our Lord's own warnings, 'Without me you can do nothing'<sup>3</sup> and 'He that gathereth not with me scattereth.'<sup>4</sup>

The pope gives three instances of this modern apostasy from God. First, 'God and the Lord Christ have been removed from the conduct of public affairs,' it being now held that it is not God but the people that is the source of the State's authority. The result has been an unrestrained spirit of faction as the various sections strive to possess themselves of that authority.

Again, 'not God, not the Lord Christ is to rule over the constitution of the family,' for marriage, so it is held, is a purely civil contract. The result here is the destruction of the home.

Lastly, 'God and Jesus Christ were banished from the education of the young . . . so that children came to think that in their lives no importance need be attached to religion and to God, as either no mention was ever made of them or, if spoken of, it was in words full of contempt.'

It is no wonder that seeds of discord sown in a soil so prepared brought forth the recent terrible war which 'far from extinguishing such hates by utter weariness, fostered ever more, with its bloodshed and its violence, hatred among the nations and also among the different classes of society.'

<sup>1</sup> 'It is difficult to think of any period in history which is so definitely rounded off in the expression of one governing idea as the period [1870-1914]. In its endeavours to balance power against power, to find security in an equilibrium of power, to solve all problems by reference to power, to exclude from the sphere of power the common morality and what, in common parlance, are called the rights and wrongs—in all this it seems to me unique. . . . Never did groups of nations practise [these principles] with the same consistency and continuity as in the forty years before the [last] war. Never was there so complete and candid an avowal that the private and public morality are of a different order, and that the public morality which repudiates the private has the superior claim.' (SPENDER, *op. cit.*)

<sup>2</sup> Isa. i, 28.

<sup>3</sup> John xv, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xv, 23.

## IV. THE ONLY WAY TO PEACE

The first and fundamental need is to pacify men's minds. Mere politeness in external behaviour is not enough. The peace men need to possess is something which will penetrate their hearts, calm their souls and induce them to a real brotherly feeling. One peace alone can do all this, the peace of Christ.

The peace of Christ is, necessarily, not compatible with injustice,<sup>1</sup> indeed 'peace is the work of justice.'<sup>2</sup> But this justice is not 'a hard and cast-iron justice': it is that justice tempered with charity whose supreme type is seen active in the work of our redemption. This indeed was a work of justice, but it was even more a work of reconciliation and love. Justice is needed, as St. Thomas teaches, in order that obstacles to peace may be removed—injuries, for example, and loss—but 'peace itself is really and specifically an act of charity.'

This peace of Christ is not the effect of any possession of earthly riches: it is on the eternal riches of the spirit that it thrives, riches of whose excellence Our Lord never ceases to persuade us. We are not, indeed, obliged to renounce the good things of this life as a condition of possessing the peace of Christ, but 'the peace of God passeth all understanding'<sup>3</sup> and so it is that it controls those blind desires, and wards off those discordant quarrels, which the mania to possess necessarily breeds.

Once desires are thus tamed by virtue, and the things of the spirit restored to their place of honour, the happy consequence will be Christian peace, ensuring a life wholly moral, and giving new splendour to the dignity of human personality. For this human personality Christ has redeemed, His heavenly Father has adopted, and brotherly intercourse with Christ has

<sup>1</sup> '... germanam Christi pacem non posse ab iustitiæ norma deflectere'—the English version is, 'must indeed be a just peace.'

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xxxii, 17: the phrase was the heraldic motto of Pius XII when cardinal.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. iv, 7. Here, as is noted elsewhere, Pius XI—quoting the Latin text—takes the word *sensum*, which our version renders *understanding*, as meaning *natural desires*. The Peace of God is a thing which goes beyond and dominates these.

consecrated; prayer and the sacraments have made it a sharer in divine grace, the consort indeed of the divine nature, so that, in reward for a life well spent on earth, it may enjoy for ever the possession of God's own glory.

The leading cause of the present chaos is the decline in the prestige of law and in the respect due to authority. This decline is due, as has been said, to the denial of God's place as the source of all law and authority. It is the peace of Christ which, here also, provides the needed remedy, for this, being the peace of God, commands respect for order, law and authority, as many warnings and precepts of Holy Scripture bear witness.

Let anyone fairly consider those parts of Our Lord's teaching which have reference to the worth of the human person, to innocence of life, the duty of obedience, the divine arrangement of human society, marriage and the holiness of the Christian family. These and similar doctrines Our Lord brought down from heaven to this earth and Himself committed them to the Church, with the solemn promise that He would be ever present to the Church. He bade the Church proclaim these doctrines ceaselessly to all the nations, until the end of time, a teacher incapable of error. Let all this be borne in mind, and who will deny the unique capacity of the Catholic Church to remedy the world's ills and secure its peace?

The Church is in fact 'the one and only divinely constituted guardian and interpreter of these revealed truths.' Here alone is there any real power to extirpate the plague of materialism from private and from public life; here alone is there any power to replace it in men's minds and hearts by the discipline of such Christian principles as that the soul is spiritual and immortal; here alone is there any power to unite all classes of citizens, and indeed all mankind, in a true common brotherhood and to subject society thus restored, to God who 'beholdeth the heart.'<sup>1</sup>

The Church alone can bring about the peace of Christ today; the Church alone can ensure it for the future. For the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xvi, 7.

Church alone teaches, with a divine commission and by divine command, that all human actions, whether of individuals or of states, must conform to God's law. And the day when states and peoples do so begin to conform themselves, in home affairs and in foreign affairs, will be the beginning of the age of peace.

There have indeed been attempts to set up some system whereby, with mutual trustfulness, states may settle peacefully what controversies arise between them. But the attempt has not been very successful where the differences have been really acute. This is hardly surprising. 'For there is no human institution which has power to impose on all peoples any code of common laws adapted to the present times.' The Middle Ages possessed such an institution and code in the universally accepted religion of the Catholic Church. That code was, indeed, violated—even frequently violated—but the idea that the law is a sacred thing, and that obligations endure, was never disputed and this remained as a permanent norm for the judgement of the nations.

That divine institution, the Catholic Church, still exists; it still functions. And it is able to safeguard the sanctity of international law, for while the Church belongs to all nations, it is yet superior to all nations. Its authority is supreme, and all nations respect its office as teacher. It is the one institution that has held together through all the centuries; the only one that has come through the stress of the war not weakened, but rather marvellously strengthened.

'There is no peace of Christ save in the reign of Christ<sup>1</sup>; there is no surer way of seeking to establish peace than by inaugurating the reign of Christ.'

That is to say there can be no real peace, most certainly not the longed-for peace of Christ, 'unless the teaching, commandments, and example of Christ are faithfully followed in public and in private life,' and the Church exercises its divine office of defending God's rights whether over men as individuals or

<sup>1</sup> *Ex his liquet nullam esse Christi pacem nisi in regno Christi.*

over society as a whole. This is what is summarised in the pope's short phrase 'Regnum Christi.'<sup>1</sup> With regard to this last point, the Lord Jesus reigns in the State, says Pius XI, when the State gives to God the highest honour, and recognises that the Church is, by God's appointment, a perfect society, not indeed the only society—for all in their own order are lawful—but the teacher and head of all the rest, which it perfects as grace perfects nature.

And now Pius XI, after a special message of gratitude, and of encouragement to still greater efforts, addressed to the bishops and the clergy and the religious orders, and an appeal for still more 'Catholic Action,' gives Catholics a serious warning. There are very many Catholics who profess indeed the Catholic teaching about the authority of the State and the obedience due to the State; about the rights of property, the rights and duties of the workers; about the interrelation of states, the relations between capital and labour, the relations between Church and State, the rights of the Holy See and of bishops, the very rights of Christ, the Lord of all men and all races . . . and yet 'in their words, writings and in the whole tenour of their lives, they behave as though the teaching and commands set out by the popes, by Leo XIII especially, by Pius X and Benedict XV had lost their native strength or were become completely obsolete.'

'In this there can be recognised a certain kind of modernism in morals, in matters touching authority and the social order, the which, along with modernism in dogma, We specifically condemn.'

As for the teaching of these popes, it must be recalled to all men's minds, and efforts be made to arouse that ardent divine faith and charity which alone can give men power to understand the teaching and to put it into practice.

The pope now calls to mind the vast numbers who as yet 'are not of this fold'; some of them are utterly ignorant of

<sup>1</sup> Rendered now as 'Kingdom of Christ' and now as 'Reign of Christ' in the English translation.

Christ, others have lost the fullness of His teaching and that unity which He commanded. The pope prays that God may bring them all into the one fold, and he sees an augury of this future happiness in the way in which all the states of the world, as if moved by a common instinct and desire for peace, are turning to the Holy See and renewing their old kindly relations with it.

Finally Pius XI, but in language of great friendliness, formally renews the protestation of all his predecessors against Italy's spoliation of the civil principate which was the visible sign to mankind of the pope's sovereign status and of the reality of his independence of all temporal authority.

### THE ENCYCLICAL SUMMI PONTIFICATUS

*Pius XII (Eugene Pacelli), the pope actually reigning, was born in Rome, 2 March 1876. He comes of a family distinguished by long service in the papal administration. He was ordained priest in 1899 and appointed to a place in the office of the Cardinal Secretary of State. Here he served, in various capacities, for eighteen years, in the reigns of Leo XIII, Pius X and Benedict XV under the successive Cardinal-Secretaries Rampolla, Merry del Val, and Gasparri. In 1912, at the early age of thirty-six, he was named by Pius X Secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, and in 1917 Benedict XV appointed him nuncio to Bavaria. One of Mgr Pacelli's first tasks as nuncio was to deliver Benedict XV's Peace Note<sup>1</sup> to the Emperor Wilhelm II. Mgr Pacelli remained in Germany for the next twelve years, Pius XI continuing Benedict XV's use of his services. In 1929 he returned to Rome, to receive the red hat and to become Secretary of State in succession to Cardinal Gasparri. As Secretary of State he frequently represented Pius XI as Papal Legate, travelling in that office to France, to Hungary, to the United States, and to South*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra*, p. 265.

*America. He was elected pope 2 March 1939 after a conclave of a few hours only.*

*No one will need reminding in what a critical hour Pius XII was elected. It was only six months since Munich, when a world war was barely averted, and in another six months after the pope's election the war came. During all these months of crisis in 1939 the papal diplomacy had been ceaselessly active in an endeavour to find some solution which should satisfy demands that were lawful without compromising national 'honour' and without sacrificing rights.<sup>1</sup>*

*This inaugural encyclical appeared when the war was well into its second month.<sup>2</sup> The pope, studiously neutral in all that concerns the actual conflict of the war, is yet far from silent about the tendencies (long developing) that have produced the calamity. The Latin text of the encyclical has no title, but Mgr Knox, whose most readable translation the Catholic Truth Society publishes,<sup>3</sup> has suitably called it *Darkness over the Earth*, from one of its most striking passages. Here is an analysis of the contents.*

**I. PIUS XII DEDICATES HIS REIGN TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS CHRIST.** *The sole principle of the new pope's activity will be to preach the universal kingship of Christ, a truth already proclaimed in Leo XIII's dedication of mankind to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to which Pius XII now desires to rally all men of good will. The terrible social catastrophes of our time proclaim how opportune is this dedication and devotion to the Sacred Heart. Almost nowhere in public life is Christ recognised and obeyed as King. Whence all our disasters. The latest of these is the present war.*

**II. THE MODERN NEGLECT OF THE NATURAL LAW AND ITS REAL ULTIMATE CAUSE.** *Neglect and contempt for Natural Law is one main source of present mis-*

<sup>1</sup> For an admirable account of this see A. C. F. BEALES, *The Catholic Church and International Order* (Penguin Books), pp. 65-75.

<sup>2</sup> October 20, 1939.

<sup>3</sup> *Darkness over the Earth*. (46 pages.)

*fortunes—this neglect began when Europe apostatised from the Catholic Church, and it is especially bound up with the later denial that Jesus Christ is God. From this last denial has come the 'darkness over the earth.' This is the age of Secularism or 'Laicism,' not of the truth which is divine. The morality of revelation has been abandoned for a new 'secularist' morality, in which God has no place.*

**III. THE NEW DENIAL OF THE SOLIDARITY OF MANKIND AND HUMAN BROTHERHOOD.** *One first effect of the new morality examined, viz., the disregard and denial of the truth that all mankind is one family: the pope explains the traditional, Christian teaching; the relation of national differences to this unity: all races are equally human, and have equal rights within God's Church.*

**IV. THE AUTONOMOUS STATE AND THE EVILS IT BRINGS.** *A second effect of the new morality, viz., the autonomous state; the disastrous effects of regarding the State as supreme and autonomous, (a) effects upon industrial life, (b) effects upon the life of the family, (c) effects upon international life; the pope's protestation against tyranny, and his warning how such tyranny must end; the doctrine that states are autonomous<sup>1</sup> necessarily means the end of international confidence, of the security of small nations and of all possibility of stable agreements between nations.*

**V. THE FUTURE 'NEW ORDER.'** *The 'new order' that will follow the war must be based on the Natural Law and God's revelation, or it will fail. But to bring this about, humanity needs to be re-educated, and re-educated especially in the doctrine of a divine Redeemer. Such re-education is the very task for which God founded the Catholic Church. A call to Catholics to prepare themselves for this task; a call to governments not to refuse the Church's aid; an invitation to men*

<sup>1</sup> i.e., that the State is a law unto itself.

*everywhere who believe in God and in Jesus Christ to join with the pope.*

*The encyclical closes with a message of sympathy to Poland; and with an appeal to Catholics everywhere for prayers, for works of charity and penance, that God will give us peace.*

# I. PIUS XII DEDICATES HIS REIGN TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS CHRIST

PIUS XII begins by recalling how it was in the very year of Leo XIII's dedication of the human race to the Sacred Heart of Jesus<sup>1</sup> that he was himself ordained priest, and he declares his resolve that his life as pope shall begin as his priestly life began, i.e., under the influence of that dedication and wholly devoted to all that it stands for.

Pius XII, then, takes this cult of the 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords' as the principle and the aim that will inspire all his endeavours. To preach the reign of Christ will, in fact, be henceforward his sole object.

The history of the world in the forty years since Leo XIII's

<sup>1</sup> See Leo XIII's encyclical, *Annum Sacrum*, 25 May 1899, in *The Holy Ghost and the Sacred Heart* (Catholic Truth Society), pp. 23-31. What Leo XIII's aim, and how, in this pope's mind, this devotion is especially appropriate in an age where the mission of Catholicism is most evidently and above all a social mission, the following quotations will perhaps show. '... by consecrating ourselves to Him we not only declare our open and free acknowledgement and acceptance of His authority over us, but we also testify that if what we offer as a gift were really our own, we should still offer it with our whole heart. . . . Since there is in the Sacred Heart a symbol and sensible image of the infinite Love of Jesus Christ which moves us to love one another, therefore it is fit and proper that we should consecrate ourselves to His most Sacred Heart . . . an act which is nothing else than an offering and a binding of oneself to Jesus Christ. . . . Such an act of consecration, since it can establish or draw tighter the bonds which naturally connect public affairs with God, gives to states a hope of better things . . . the splendours of peace will be renewed, and swords and arms fall from the hand when all men shall acknowledge the empire of Christ and willingly obey His word, and "every tongue shall confess that Our Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father,"' op. cit., 26, 27, 28, 29. Noteworthy, too, is the declaration of Pius XI (encyclical *Miserentissimus Redemptor*, 8 May 1928) that the symbol of the Sacred Heart and the devotion sum up the whole of our religion and the rule of the perfect Christian life.

great gesture shows only too clearly how the world has needed some such cult as this, to inspire men, to purify them, to strengthen them. That work of Leo XIII, completed by Pius XI's institution in 1925 of the feast of Christ the King,<sup>1</sup> was then most timely. No age ever needed more the blessings which loyalty to Christ brings with it. The age has, of course, seen marvellous inventions and much improvement in the outward comforts of life. 'But was there ever an age which suffered more from mental starvation, from a deeply-rooted impoverishment of the human soul? It has surely verified that clear prophecy in the Apocalypse.<sup>2</sup> "Thou hast said, I am rich, I have prospered, I want for nothing; and dost thou not perceive that thou art wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked."'

There is, then, no duty more pressing to-day than 'to make known the unfathomable riches of Christ,' to unfurl His standard, and rally mankind to the triumphant Cross. The array of Christ's enemies grows ever more dangerously; the preachers of lying doctrine are ceaselessly at work. Not only is the Christian faith attacked, or one or other of God's commandments, but another rule of life altogether is now preached, a rule that repudiates the law of the ten commandments, the Sermon on the Mount and the lesson of the Cross itself. And, of course, there have been weaker brethren—strong to all appearance, so long as life was untroubled—who have fallen victims to these aberrations, and shown themselves doubters and cowards and weaklings, shrinking from the worldly loss that follows on being a true Christian, with no heart to follow the blood-stained footsteps of their divine Redeemer.

It is under the patronage of the Redeemer as King that this letter goes out to the world, and the pope is confident that Catholics will respond generously. Already the dangers and anxieties of these days have roused Catholics to a sense of their common kinship—nay, have rallied everywhere all those who believe in God and follow Christ as their leader, and who real-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the encyclical *Quas Primas*, p. 71 *infra*.

<sup>2</sup> Apoc. iii, 17.

ise that a common peril hangs over us all. This Catholic sense of common kinship is a great encouragement to the pope, and so too is the good will of those many others. 'We commit them one and all to God's care and God's guidance; and we give them the solemn assurance that the one aim that inspires us is that of following constantly the Good Shepherd.'

The general theme of the encyclical has now been stated, and the pope proceeds to review the general situation of the world in the light of the twofold fact (1) that Jesus Christ is the universal King and (2) that almost nowhere in public life is He to-day so acknowledged. Nay, even, this kingship is violently repudiated in many places and with it all that Christ came to teach and to do.

First of all the pope explains the point of view from which he will make his analysis of the world situation. It is as the duty-bound witness to the truth that he intervenes. The pope, says Pius XII, is bound to fulfil his duty of bearing witness to the truth, with all the firmness of an apostle. This means that he must expose errors and refute them, and Pius XII solemnly pledges himself that, from this task, no consideration whatever shall ever deter him, not even the fear of being misunderstood or maliciously misrepresented. But his model in this pastoral work of guarding his flock will be the divine Shepherd, Christ Our Lord, following whom the pope will strive 'to do the work of truth in charity.'<sup>1</sup>

The beginning and source of the whole modern catastrophe, the pope repeats, is the attempt to dethrone Christ; the only way back is for men to submit themselves to Him anew.

And now—'Even as We write these lines,' says the pope—there has come this terrifying war, with losses already almost too grievous to think about, and with infinitely greater losses in prospect. What is to be thought of it all? Nothing but the all-powerful mercy of God can bring mankind out of this horror. It may even be that the very horror will work a change of

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv, 15.

mind in some of God's enemies, and that they will see how wrong the ideals and principles are that have brought the world to this pass, the ideals for which they have abandoned God and persecuted the Church that maintained, and everywhere preached, God and the divine ideals. Many 'have attached little importance to the influence which is exercised at all times by the Church's pastoral care in moral and religious education. Now perhaps they will have a better appreciation of . . . those warnings of the Church which they neglected in times of ease and safety. . . . This mass of errors, this sink of doctrines which repudiated the Christian name, has produced its results; and those results are so poisonous as to constitute a damning indictment of the opinions in question.' Will the arrival of catastrophe bring about a new attitude towards the prophet so long derided, and towards the divine remedies still to hand? 'Sometimes, when human hopes cheat us and fail us, divine grace dawns on our troubled spirits; we feel it as "the Lord's passing-by,"<sup>1</sup> we hear our Redeemer say, "Behold, I stand at the gate and knock,"<sup>2</sup> and doors are opened to Him which at any other time would have remained shut.' May God so assist and direct all those who are in such need!

But with regard to his primal duty of exposing and refuting errors, 'doing the work of truth in charity,'<sup>3</sup> the present is not a suitable moment, says the pope, for any full work of this kind. Instead—it is all that conditions to-day make practicable—Pius XII will content himself with some remarks on the chief aberrations of the time.

## II. THE MODERN NEGLECT OF THE NATURAL LAW AND ITS REAL ULTIMATE CAUSE

One mistake in particular can be singled out as the deeply hidden source whence flow all the evils that afflict the modern state. This mistake is the contempt and neglect for what is called the Natural Law, i.e., that universal standard of moral

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Apoc. iii, 20.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. iv, 15.

righteousness which holds for all human conduct, whether it be the acts of individual men or of such collectivities as the different states.<sup>1</sup>

Now this Natural Law has, for its foundation and support, 'God, the almighty creator and father of us all, the supreme and perfect lawgiver, the wise and just rewarder of human conduct.' So, once there is a denial of that eternal divinity, the very foundation of all human decency begins to collapse, and the voice of nature gradually ceases—that voice of nature which teaches even the unlearned and the primitive savage what is right and what is wrong, what is allowed and what forbidden, and warns us all that one day we must give an account of our actions to a Judge from whom there is no appeal.

How is it that these notions of fundamental morality have come to disappear? In Europe, says the pope, it began when men began to be led away from that teaching of Jesus Christ of which the Roman See is the guardian and exponent. That teaching it was which, for centuries, had welded the different nations into a moral and cultural unity, and this common culture they passed on to other nations; so strongly did it hold them. Then came the breakaway from the infallible teacher, and after that such a falling off that the very basis of Christian teaching was rejected, the doctrine namely that Jesus Christ is truly God.

This foundation denied, the whole religion of those responsible necessarily deteriorated and declined. There happened, what has always happened in such cases, what hap-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Spender's portrait of the typical European statesman of the generation in which the war of 1914-1918 germinated. He is 'a patriotic materialist. He may be a religious man, even, like Bismarck, a piously evangelical man, [!] but he regards religion as an affair of the private life with which statesmanship is not concerned. To him the God of Nations is the God of Battles, who has no mercy on weaklings pleading for the Christian virtues in the dealings of nations . . . the object he sets before himself is not the settlement of questions according to what, in other relations, would be called their merits, or their rights and wrongs, but to make sure they are not settled in any way which diminishes the power of his own country or enhances that of a rival. This method is applied consistently over the whole field . . . and it leaves him with an accumulation of unsolved problems for which there is no remedy but war . . .' (op. cit., 295-6).

pened, in a kind of parable, when Our Lord was crucified: 'there was darkness over all the face of the earth.'<sup>1</sup> The darkness of to-day is a darkness in which men no longer clearly see the difference between right and wrong. The old rules of morality are held to be obsolete. The maxims of what is called 'Laicism' are more and more adopted as the basis of public life. The influence of God and His Church is so restricted by the action of laws which the new morality inspires, that the individual citizen, his family life, and the life of the State are, more and more, put completely outside that influence. All the signs of the diseases that destroyed the pagan world of old can now be discerned in this world of ours, even in countries 'where the light of Christian civilisation has shone for centuries.'

It is true that men have not always understood what it was that they were abandoning, or how far they really were from enjoying a 'liberation.' Nor did they guess the nature of the real slavery towards which they were marching, 'handing themselves over to a capricious ruler, to the feeble and groveling ingenuity of men.' 'They had not the wit to see that any human effort to substitute for Christ's law some base model of it, must prove altogether empty and unfruitful.' But, in fact, so it was, and 'vanity was the end of their designs.'<sup>2</sup>

Was, then, the age when all Europe was Catholic a golden age, free from war, and miseries? By no means; but there was this great difference between that age and our own, namely, that all men then were clearly aware what was right and what wrong. This common awareness 'made agreement easier'; it worked to restrain the fierce appetites of the lawless, and in times of conflict 'it opened and paved the way for an honourable settlement.' To-day it is not only conflicting desires that are the cause of wars, but the deeper conflict of different standards of morality. Here is the reason for the levity with which men to-day jettison 'all the canons of private and public honesty and decency' as it suits them. And here is the reason why we are afflicted with an evil greater than any the Middle Ages

<sup>1</sup> Roman Breviary, 4th Responsory of Good Friday.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. i, 21.

ever knew, to wit, the despair of any solution for the chaos with whose every detail our embittered minds are only too familiar.

The morality of revelation, then, disappeared with the rejection of the revealed doctrine. Two immense aberrations are apparent in the resultant void, and since these 'make peace among nations precarious, uncertain and well-nigh impossible,' they call for our serious consideration.

### III. THE NEW DENIAL OF THE SOLIDARITY OF MANKIND AND HUMAN BROTHERHOOD

The first aberration, 'disastrously widespread in our day,' consists in a forgetfulness of what is called for, first by the common origin of mankind, then, secondly, by man's possession (whatever the race to which he belongs) of the same, identical, reasoning, human nature, and finally, by the single divine sacrifice upon the Cross by which all men stand redeemed—a forgetfulness, that is to say, of man's kinship with his fellows and the mutual love which ought to flow from this.

To this, now often forgotten, truth Holy Scripture bears frequent witness, St. Paul for example saying, most strikingly, that God 'made of one blood the whole race of men.'<sup>1</sup> All men have in common their origin, their nature, their destiny, their duties on this earth, the means by which they were redeemed and by which they may attain heaven. And there is for all men Our Lord's one same commandment, 'Love one another as I have loved you.'<sup>2</sup>

The foundation and the bond of human solidarity lies, then, not in any merely human theory but in truths that are divine.

Moreover, 'we ought not to think of this unity . . . as the unity of a heap; the individual citizen is not one grain of sand among countless other grains of sand.' It is a unity where all

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvii, 26.

<sup>2</sup> John xv, 12.

are parts of a whole; all bound together in an order carefully adapted, bound also by their various, mutual need one of another; in an order and through needs set up by men's natural and supernatural destinies.

'As nations become more civilised, they become more highly differentiated in their ways of life and of managing their affairs.' But the fact of such variety of national differences does not at all detract from the fundamental unity of all mankind. All men continue to be just as fully men however they may differ in their national outlook and way of life. Through these differences the several nations should enrich, rather, the essential unity of mankind, and the Church of Jesus Christ has always welcomed them.

Though the Church's aim, always, is unity among Catholics, it has never been her policy to impose uniformity. 'It is quite legitimate for nations to treat those differences as a sacred inheritance and guard them at all costs.' National genius has always had a friend in the Catholic Church, and so long as its development does not cut across those duties to other men which our common origin and common destiny entail, the Church will always bless the gifts and characteristics peculiar to any one people.

For a proof that this is the truth, we have only to note the way in which the Church conducts the great work of the foreign missions. Here the principle of national differences is a very guiding star of policy, and whatever good things the special genius of any race has produced are gladly preserved and pressed into the service of Christ. Hence, 'All those who embrace the unity of the Catholic Church, whatever their race or their speech, may rest assured that they will have the full rights of sons in this house of our common Father, wherein all live by the law and in the peace of Jesus Christ.'

The bitter contentions which to-day rend the unity of mankind leave unchanged the Church's teaching and her practice. To-day, as in St. Paul's time, it is true that with the Church

'there is neither Gentile nor Jew, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, no barbarian and Scythian, no slavery and freedom, but Christ is all things and in all things.' <sup>1</sup>

The fundamental unity of mankind is, then, not a danger to the development of nations; nor is the love which flows from that unity dangerous to the love a man should have for his own land and fellow-countrymen.

In fact, the same Christian teaching that bids all men love one another, bids them also love more especially those bound to them by special ties: so Our Lord loved Jerusalem with a special love, as we see from the story of His tears at the thought of the city's coming doom. 'But love of country, a thing which in itself has every right to be encouraged, must not interfere with, must not take precedence of, the commandment to show Christian charity towards all men.'

As to the effects of this Christian teaching about the universal brotherhood of all mankind, we can read on every page of the world's history what great things it has accomplished for the civilisation and culture of every nation in turn. Here was the inspiration of the missionaries who were, in fact, the pioneers of the advance of civilisation. These men, whom love for their fellow-men as such inspired, were the means of untold temporal blessings wherever their great love took them.

#### IV. THE AUTONOMOUS STATE AND THE EVILS IT BRINGS

The second aberration to which the pope draws attention as a leading cause that is to-day making peace all but impossible, is 'the error of those who impiously endeavour to dissociate the civil authority from any connexion at all with the Divine Being; forgetting that the community quite as much as the individual depends upon Him as its first author and its supreme governor.' The State, so it is declared—and political action bears out the theory—is under no obligation to obey

<sup>1</sup> Col. iii, 10, 11.

God's law. It can act just as it chooses. The only restraints on the frail and fallen wills of those who rule are what past experience, or economic necessity, shows not to pay.

The fact is, of course, that the State, once it ignores God and sets aside His laws and its own duty to obey them, steps into God's place; it usurps, as it were, His power over men and itself proceeds to act as if it were God. It is the State, for example, which is then proposed to the citizens as the whole aim and purpose of their existence. The State's needs, convenience and will becomes the touchstone of morality; it is the State which decides what is good, what is bad, and against its standards no appeal is allowed, whether to the Christian conscience or to the Natural Law.

In some countries, where the Christian tradition has been strong for centuries—and because of this—the effect of the State's apostasy from God has perhaps been less evident; but the principle holds good, nevertheless, that to build a state on merely human foundations is to build it upon sand. Earthly prudence alone will not suffice for the administration of any state, nor will the coercion of force be enough to maintain order within it.

The principle also remains that whenever authority, and rights, are held to be things of merely natural origin, and when the State's aim is no longer what is just, but what pays, law—human law—'loses all its inner hold over men's consciences.' And once this inner hold disappears, 'human law itself no longer receives any real recognition, is no longer in a position to call on the citizen to make sacrifices.'

Sometimes a state 'which in fact is based on a precarious foundation of this kind does meet with material successes, through chance or through the special conditions of the moment. It commands the admiration of shallow minds.' But this splendour is bound to be short-lived. 'There is an inevitable law which will take its vengeance in the end.' The want of proportion which is the result of not giving God His due place, the lack of 'a real backing, based on uprightness and honour,

to cover the currency of its material success' will tell in the end. Such states can never 'escape from ultimate ruin.'

Pope Leo XIII, many years ago, in the letter *Immortale Dei*,<sup>1</sup> explained that the State exists in order to help man to achieve his own perfection in this world and thus to come to his final supernatural end in the next. The State, then, has to regulate the whole varied life of a people in view of a common end or purpose. What is this common end? Who shall fix it? It is certainly 'not to be determined by the arbitrary will of any individual'; nor is it the material prosperity of the State. Again it is not the State that can decide what this end is, for that end is the very object to serve which the State was called into being. The common end is, in fact, assistance to mankind in the task of achieving its own natural perfection: the State is to man 'a means and a protection' in that business.

Now the theory that the State is itself, for its own sake, the end and object towards which all human endeavours should tend, 'to which all must bow,' is fatal to all real and lasting prosperity among nations—this is always true whether, in a state organised as a democracy, such unlimited competency has been granted by the people, or whether the ruling power has itself usurped it.

**THE THEORY FATAL TO INDUSTRY.** The theory is fatal to industry if, for example, putting it into practice, the State takes over and claims for itself all the enterprises of private industry. The natural setting for such enterprises is 'private responsibility and private risk.' These enterprises are regulated by a multiplicity of rules and standards peculiar to themselves. If these enterprises be taken out of their natural setting the result is public loss.

**THE THEORY FATAL TO HEALTHY FAMILY LIFE.** But, what is most dangerous of all to a nation, the theory of the omnipotent

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra*, p. 84.

state is fatal to healthy family life. 'Domestic life, the primary and indispensable cell of human society, with all its claims and interests, is thrown into the background; it is regarded as having no existence except in relation to the government of the country.' But the family is, in reality, prior to the State. To regard it as existing for the sake of the State is to invert the natural order of things. The exact converse of this is true, viz., the State exists for the sake of the family. And those who defend these new state ideals maintain that the final object of education is, yet once again, the State, i.e., to make the young people more profitable servants of the State, better tools for the State to use. It is not the ultimate well-being of the individual child or youth which, in their eyes, should guide all that is done to cultivate and foster minds and bodies; such notions as honour, duty, kindness—and the obligations these beget—are counted as nothing by comparison with the claims of the State: nay they are despised, as being likely to weaken the citizens' absolute devotion to the ends of state policy.

To-day we can see the sad spectacle of such tyranny in full possession. In the face of this spectacle the pope's duty, says Pius XII, is clear, viz., to defend the privileged position of the family. Already family life suffers from 'a daily burden of difficulties and hardships, under a want of means that threatens to outdo all the experience of the past.' Apart altogether from the new attack on the status and rights of the family now launched by certain states, the burden on parents is terrible and priests who know it 'are watching with apprehensive eyes the formidable growth of this load of human misery.' Here, in fact, is material ready to hand for those spirits of wickedness that aim at producing a universal convulsion.

Conditions—economic and social conditions—are indeed desperate, and call for desperate remedies. No sensible man will complain if the State arrogates to itself 'extraordinary powers in order to meet this situation and to remedy the miseries of the poor.' Yet, God's law 'bids us carefully distinguish, in the

interests of the common good, what is the right and what is the wrong way' of dealing with the problem. And the more the State feels bound to demand from citizens in the way of sacrifice, the more careful must it be to respect the rights of conscience. 'Goods, blood even, it can demand, but the soul redeemed by God, never.'

Hence the State cannot ignore or override the natural right of the parent—which is the corollary of the parent's duty in conscience—to see that his child is educated 'in the true principles of religion.' 'That is a right which no man can usurp, without the gravest injury to natural justice.' Such education will, of course, make it an aim to develop the child's patriotism. But, 'any training of the young which, of deliberate purpose, neglects to direct their minds also towards that fatherland which is heaven, does a grave wrong' both to the young people and to the rights ('which are also the duties') of the family. 'Such secular education may seem, to those who take the responsibility for it, a source of hardihood and vigour; but the events which lie before us will prove the fallacy of such an estimate. Any training of young minds which neglects or repudiates the feeling and the spirit of the Christian religion is a crime of high treason against Him who is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."' He who was mercy and kindness itself, who said 'Suffer the little children to come to Me,' threatened the most terrible punishments, nevertheless, to those who should set obstacles in the way of these little ones. And what greater hindrance could there be than 'a training which points them to a wrong goal, far from that Christ, who is "the way, the truth and the life"?' 'As throwing an obstacle in the way of Jesus Christ's divine invitation [secular education] is destined to reap a bitter harvest.'

And, after all, Christ is God. The fortunes of all states are in His hand. Nothing in this world is immortal, except the human soul. Any system of education that fails to respect the sacredness of family life, or that menaces its foundations by forbidding the young 'to drink with joy the waters that flow

from the Saviour's fountain' <sup>1</sup>; any system that 'preaches apostasy from Christ and His Church, or that cries this up as the proof of loyalty to some ideal of class or of race; any such system seals its own condemnation.' There will come upon it what was prophesied of old, 'Those who depart from Me shall be names written in sand.' <sup>2</sup>

THE THEORY FATAL TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE. This aberration that endows the State with unlimited powers is fatal to international peace. A natural order, of which God is the author, has divided mankind among a variety of nations and states. These states are wholly independent of each other in all that regards their domestic affairs. But they form, nevertheless, one vast community of nations. The purpose of that vast community is the general good of mankind; and the human race, thus divided into nations, is nevertheless bound together by mutual obligations both of law and of a moral kind. The unity of this community, and its prosperity, are safeguarded by special rules—what is called International Law.

It must be evident that the claim of states to be absolutely and in every way a law unto themselves, is utterly destructive of any system of International Law. Such capricious despotism 'leaves no room for honest agreement between states.' International agreement calls for recognition, by all parties, of the moral principles that underlie International Law, and it calls too, for a real, unanimous determination to abide by these principles.

What are these principles? (1) 'Each nation shall be allowed to keep its own liberties intact,' and (2) 'Shall have the right to its own life and economic development,' (3) 'Any pact which has been solemnly ratified in accordance with the law of nations shall continue to keep all its force, unimpaired and inviolable.'

No peace is even possible unless nations can agree on this, that 'an oath once given will be kept sacred by both parties.'

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xii, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. xvii, 13.

Unless all are persuaded that oaths will thus be kept, no mutual confidence is possible. Also there must be 'general acceptance of the maxim that "wisdom is a better thing than weapons of war"' <sup>1</sup>: all must be ready to submit to arbitration and discussion; ready also to endure with patience delays, and the inevitable changes of situation that occur during negotiations.

Is it not obvious what must happen when International Law, instead of being understood as dependent on the divine law, is merely the creation of 'the caprice of individual rulers'? That law, then, loses all prestige in the eyes of mankind; it descends to a level where it is no more than a tool for nations to achieve their own rights and to deny those of others.

Must treaties, then, be held to be in force to the letter, even when, with time, conditions change? 'The obvious expedient,' in cases of such change, is 'a full and frank discussion of the difficulty, so that the old pact can be suitably altered, or a new pact substituted for it.' But to regard solemnly signed treaties as no more stable than water, to assume a tacit right to tear them up to suit one's own convenience, ignoring the party with whom they were made, such conduct as this is bound to destroy absolutely all mutual confidence: 'it is utterly subversive of the natural order, and leaves nations and peoples severed from one another by deep rivers of distrust.'

It is the aberrations and false standards that we have been describing, says Pius XII, which have brought the world to its present pass. All illusions have now vanished. Our vaunted progress was but a show. In fact, we have all been the victims of an all-pervading confusion that reaches as far as the very principles of morality. For it is moral principles 'divorced from all connexion with a divine law' that have poisoned the whole field of man's activity.

#### V. THE FUTURE 'NEW ORDER'

Such is the harm done so far. What of the future? We are promised a new order, once the bloody strife is at an end. Cer-

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. ix, 18.

tainly there will be pacts, new arrangements and so forth. But unless 'a spirit of justice and fair dealing' rules the mind of the victor, we are doomed to a repetition of all the old disaster. 'Experience shows that it is but an empty dream to expect a real settlement' immediately the war is over. That moment is one of acute conflict in the victor's mind 'between the angel of justice and the devil of coercion.' Nor is public opinion, excited by all 'the heady sympathies of the crowd, the losses and miseries endured,' a good counsellor to the statesman who must make the peace.

'The sword, then, cannot breed peace; it can only impose terms of peace.' It cannot restore states to healthy life. Not from any outside power, but from the depths of men's hearts, must come the forces that are to renew the world. The new order, if there is to be one, 'must stand firmly based on the immovable rock of the natural law, and God's revelation.' It is from these that the new lawgiver 'must derive his principle of balance, his sense of duty, his gift of prudence.' Should he seek elsewhere the basis of his awards, these must lack all internal stability, and those 'august sanctions' which religion can give; nor will his awards be found, in the end, to have any other origin but self-interest and greed.

For although 'economic maladjustment' and 'competition between nations' have had much to do with the origin of our present troubles, their root really lies far deeper than this. It is to be sought in the chasm that yawns between religious faith and the new modern morality—a morality corrupted at its source because people 'are slowly losing touch with the principles of right dealing, with the unity of Christian faith and doctrine, which the untiring beneficence of the Church once instilled into them.' Therefore, if the re-education of humanity is to be at all fruitful it must be first of all a religious re-education, and its beginning must be the doctrine of a divine Redeemer.

To bring about this renewal of men's minds is the especial

task of the Catholic Church. It is through the preaching of the Gospel that men learn what truth is and justice and charity, and it was to the Church that its divine Founder committed that preaching. The difficulties are immense and, indeed, disheartening. They make a call, however, on every Catholic, for it is the duty of all Catholics—and not of the clergy only—to bring those outside the Church to a knowledge of the spiritual privileges it offers.

And here the pope pauses to congratulate the apostles of Catholic Action, who are 'a rich source of grace and strength.' As priests to-day 'are scarce in comparison with the calls made on them,' this army of active apostolic Catholics must be still further increased. In such an apostolate 'the life of the family has a special part to play,' most of all because it is the first and most important school in which the young are trained to know God, to love, and to serve Him. Here, too, is the ultimate centre of resistance to the new attempt to dethrone Christ. 'In countries where churches are closed, where the crucifix is removed from schools and colleges, the family circle remains as the one impregnable citadel of Christian culture.'

Like Leo XIII, Pope Pius XII cannot but marvel that nations refuse the immense assistance which Catholicism offers to every good element of national life and to the cause of peace. 'If only the Church were given everywhere that freedom of action which is her undoubted and inalienable right,' he says.

After all, there is no opposition between 'the laws which govern Christian life and the principles of a genuine, honest humanitarianism.' May our present troubles open men's eyes to this, and bring them to think more seriously about the claims of Christ and the role of the Church. May governments give the Church freedom, for 'the Church cannot play her part as peace-maker so long as obstacles are put in her way to hinder her in her divinely appointed mission . . . and so long as any great body of the people, especially in youth, is withdrawn from her beneficent influence.'

As for the Church, she can never, of course, abdicate this charge given her by God, namely 'to restore all things in Christ.'<sup>1</sup>

One happy omen of better times is the fact that many to-day are beginning to look with renewed hope to the Church and the Holy See, hoping to find there some means of restoring the old unity of religion and morals. Among them there are rulers, too, who 'look back with wistful longing to that earlier unity,' and there are not a few noble-hearted souls, separated from Rome, who yet, in their thirst for justice and peace, turn their eyes to St. Peter's see, waiting for its guidance and light. The indomitable firmness of the popes and the loyalty to them of the united Catholic episcopate in the modern fight to preserve intact the Christian faith and Christian morality, have been a powerful force drawing men back to this expectation of Roman action.

It yet remains true that 'this doctrine of Jesus Christ,' and the Church's tireless industry in preaching it, continue to arouse suspicions that the popes have ulterior, political aims, that they are scheming to dominate the civil life of the states. To this the pope replies by a most solemn protestation and denial. The very contrary is true, namely that the Church most anxiously preaches that men should give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's<sup>2</sup> and that to obey and respect the ruling powers is a duty of Christian life, for it is from God that rulers, too, derive their mission.

The last pages of the encyclical deal with the war. The blood of its many victims, says the pope, cries to heaven, and especially, among such victims, the dear Polish nation, 'imperishably crowned in the pages of history by the long record of her loyalty to the Church and her services to Christian civilisation.' Poland has claims on the sympathy of us all, says Pius XII, and Poland, he is confident, will rise again 'unharméd from the waves that have engulfed her.'

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxii, 21.

The pope's own endeavours to avert the war were, unhappily, not successful. He spared no effort, took all risks. 'There was reason to fear that the advice We gave, once it was made public, would be taken in bad part; that could not be helped. But Our advice, respectfully listened to, was not taken.'

And now there remains, for all of us, the duty of Christian charity. Catholics must show the world that this is 'no empty word but a living truth.' The Church waits, meanwhile, and endures the storm. God, in His own time, will give us peace, and so let us all continually beseech Him. Prayer, penance—especially the prayers of the innocent children of the world—must be made without ceasing. The pope ends with a prayer that is almost as old as the Church itself, 'Lord, remember Thy Church, to deliver it from all evil, and to perfect it in Thy love; and gather it together from the four winds of heaven, sanctified into Thy kingdom, for Thine is power and glory for ever.'

## CHAPTER II

### SOME ERRONEOUS SOLUTIONS: AN ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF THE ENCYCLICALS *QUOD APOSTOLICI MUNERIS* OF LEO XIII (28 DECEMBER 1878) AND *DIVINI REDEMPTORIS* OF PIUS XI (19 MARCH 1937)

#### THE ENCYCLICAL *QUOD APOSTOLICI MUNERIS*

*Leo XIII published this encyclical eight months after his inaugural letter Inscrutabili. Soderini<sup>1</sup> has much to say of the opposition it raised among the clerical 'Old Guard.' These venerable men both doubted the wisdom of the pope's expressed intention to go to the world in an endeavour to lead the world, and at the same time they feared reprisals from the Socialists and others whose systems of thought were singled out for reprobation. 'These men are too old for me,' said Leo of his Catholic critics. The novelty of the new pope's method is again evident, i.e., a dispassionate analysis of the state of Europe, a reasoned condemnation of erroneous theories, teaching which does not disdain to argue, and, just as evident as his concern for civilisation, the pope's insistence on the primacy of the spiritual. Characteristic also of Leo XIII—and a most important element in his general policy—is his invitation to the governments of the world to co-operate with the Church and accept her aid in the great task of strengthening the foundations of civilisation and order.*

*'We lift up anew Our Apostolic voice,' says the pope, 'and conjure rulers, again and again, for the sake of their own safety and that of the State, to welcome and to obey the teaching of*

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Leo XIII*, Vol. I.

*that Church which has deserved so well in promoting the public prosperity of nations, and to recognise once for all that the relations of the State and of Religion are so bound together that whatever is withdrawn from Religion impairs by so much the dutiful submission of the subject and the dignity of authority.'*

*The encyclical, whose English title—Socialism, Communism, Nihilism—faithfully translates the Latin sub-title, is less general than Inscrutabili and much more closely reasoned.<sup>1</sup> Here is an analysis of its argument.*

*I. THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT. Leo XIII describes and criticises the modern novelty that an active revolutionary movement, publicly organised as a political party, is now attacking three Fundamental Principles of Public Well-being: (1) The belief that obedience to governments is a duty; (2) marriage; (3) the right of private ownership. The origin of this new movement must be sought in the religious upheaval of the sixteenth century, the effect of which was that (1) Revelation was rejected; (2) the Supernatural Order was overturned; (3) Reason alone taken as man's guide. And now (i.e., 1878) we have systems of government that are godless; authority is held to be a purely human creation; Christ and His teaching have no place in education; belief in a future life is no longer effective. Whence the struggle has become chronic between 'have-nots' on the look-out for opportunities of plunder, and the 'haves' now stricken with a permanent fear. The popes have, for a century and more, warned the world against the heresies and theories whence all this trouble comes; but rulers have preferred the friendship of their own real enemies to that of the Church. Leo XIII proposes to set out once more the teaching of the Church on the three fundamental principles which the Revolution threatens.*

*II. GOVERNMENTS AND THE OBEDIENCE DUE TO THEM. The pope contrasts the Socialist theories with the tra-*

<sup>1</sup> English translation in *The Pope and the People*, pp. 12-22.

*ditional Catholic teaching: in the divinely arranged plan men are equal as God's children but unequal in status and rights—an inequality that is balanced by the fact of their mutual rights and duties. The ruler's power is divine in origin, and it is God who will call rulers to account for their use of that power.*

**III. MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY.** *The very nature of the family calls for a permanent union of husband and wife. What authority the father has over his family comes to him from God.*

**IV. THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.** *Again the pope contrasts, in some detail, Socialist theories and Catholic doctrine; and he ends with an appeal to rulers; and some instructions for the bishops.*

#### I. THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

AT the very outset of the letter Leo XIII shows his understanding of the new age in which his pontificate was cast—an understanding so complete that it marks him out as easily the greatest pope of modern times. Leo XIII sees, and proposes to deal with here, the novel situation that a revolutionary social movement is everywhere publicly organised as a political party, with the avowed purpose 'of uprooting the foundations of civilised society at large.' This movement is the alliance, using the word in a general way, of Socialists, Communists, and Nihilists.

What, more precisely, are the institutions against which these parties work? What is it they are attacking? Three things principally, namely, (1) the idea that obedience to rulers is a duty; (2) the institution of marriage; (3) the right of property.

In the first place (1) 'they preach up the perfect equality of all men both as regards rights and duties,' next, (2) they work for the slackening of the indissoluble marriage bond; and finally (3) 'they strain every effort to seize upon and hold in common all that has been individually acquired by title of law-

ful inheritance, through intellectual or manual labour, or economy of living.'

Next Leo XIII proceeds to describe and to analyse the source of this mischievous teaching. He finds it, first of all, in the theories of the sixteenth-century Reformers. These men, through their war against the Catholic Church, brought about the rejection of all revelation, the subversion of the supernatural order, and the enthronement of the unaided reason as man's sole guide. These are the main principles of what has come to be called Rationalism. It has been a popular movement because it 'flatters and stimulates the eagerness to outstrip others which is interwoven with man's nature.' By this time (1878) Rationalism has pervaded the whole of civilised society.

Whence, on all sides, we can see governments organised without God, and political régimes established without God being taken at all into account—an impiety unknown even to the very Pagans! We see, too, an ever wider acceptance of the theory that public authority, with its power of ruling, originates not from God but from the mass of the people—and this mass refusing to be bound by any law that it has not itself passed of its own free will. Supernatural truths of faith having been rejected as contrary to reason, the very Author and Redeemer of mankind has been forced to withdraw from every part of the system of education, as well as from the working of public life. Finally, belief in a future life with its rewards or punishments has disappeared, and man's 'keen longing after happiness has been narrowed down to the range of the present life.'

'It is no wonder that men of the most lowly condition, heart-sick of a humble home or poor workshop, should fix eager eyes on the abodes and fortunes of the wealthy; no wonder that tranquillity no longer prevails in public or in private life.'

The popes have for long devoted all their energies to combat this plague of false teaching and teachers. Clement XII (1730-1740) and Benedict XIV (1740-1758) unmasked the aims of

the first Freemasons; Pius VI (1775-1799) condemned the false theories of the 'philosophers' of the eighteenth century; Pius VII (1800-1823), Leo XII (1823-1829) and Pius IX (1846-1878) continued this good work through the nineteenth century.

Rulers have, however, preferred to be manipulated by these enemies of society, and, at their bidding, have actually chosen to oppress this Church which is public order's chief safeguard, and whose doctrines work for the destruction of 'the accursed brood of Socialism.'

The pope now proceeds to contrast Catholic teaching on Governments and the obedience due to them, on Marriage, and on Private Ownership, with the Socialist, Communist and Nihilist theories.

## II. GOVERNMENTS AND THE OBEDIENCE DUE TO THEM

Socialists, it is true, often claim the authority of religion for their proposals, but the claim is not warranted, for 'so striking is the disagreement between their criminal teachings and the pure doctrine of Christ, that no greater can exist.' The pope, thereupon, contrasts the Socialist teaching with the Gospel. According to Socialism, 'all men are by nature equal,' with this corollary that 'neither honour nor respect is owing to public authority, nor any obedience to the laws, saving perhaps those which have been sanctioned according to [men's] good pleasure.' The Gospel doctrine is that men are equal as the children of God; before them all lies a like end, and judgement according to a single law. There is, nevertheless, among men an inequality of rights and authority and this 'emanates from the Author of nature himself.' There are rulers and there are subjects. Both rulers and subjects are bound to each other mutually by rights and by duties so that (1) the desire for power is moderated in the ruler and (2) the subject's obedience is made easy, stable and wholly honourable.

This system of inequality of status, balanced by mutual rights and duties, is the creation of God Himself. Therefore

the Church constantly reminds us of it; 'There is no power but from God,' says St. Paul, 'and the powers that be, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation.' It is God who has 'established in Civil Society many orders of varying dignity, right and power,' which form a divinely arranged hierarchy in the State comparable to that established in the Church and among the angels in the heavenly kingdom. Rulers, too, have duties and obligations. Their power is given them 'for the advancement and not the detriment of those under their rule' and the pope solemnly warns rulers that one day 'the Sovereign Judge will call them to a strict and speedy account.'

Suppose 'rulers act rashly and arbitrarily'? Even so, 'the teaching of the Catholic Church does not allow subjects to rise against them without further warranty.' Why not? 'Lest peace and order become more and more disturbed, and society run the risk of greater loss.' Even 'when things have come to such a pass as to hold out no further hope,' the remedy is to be sought in Christian patience and in urgent prayer to God. But if rulers command anything contrary to the divine or natural law, it is God we must obey 'rather than men.'

### III. MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

The nature of the family is such as to call for a union of husband and wife that is indissoluble. As the family is the starting-point of the State, it is to the interest of the State to do all in its power to satisfy this 'requirement of the natural law.' It is upon this permanent union that is built the whole superstructure (1) of the duties and rights of the parents to each other; (2) of the children to the parents, and (3) of masters and servants to each other.

All this, Socialism would quickly destroy, for Socialists deny the indissolubility of marriage and hold marriage to be merely a matter of civil contract.

Again, the Catholic teaching is that a father's authority over his children, or a master's authority over his servants, comes from God, and receives from God 'its very nature and character,' and it is a thing which the Church regulates.

If only the precepts of the Church in these matters were really observed—children obeying God in their parents; fathers never commanding (nor masters) except in the spirit of Christ; remembering to 'forbear threatenings; knowing that the Lord of all is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with Him' <sup>1</sup>—would not each household be a likeness of the heavenly home and the State itself take on thence the likeness of heaven?

#### IV. THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

The pope has shown how great a force for good the Church is in civil society, through its teaching about the nature of political authority and its rights, and also through its teaching about the indissolubility of marriage—two things in which the Church is in direct conflict with the Socialists, Communists and Nihilists against whose mistaken theories this encyclical is directed. He passes now to the third of their errors—the doctrine about the lawfulness of private ownership—and establishing against them the Catholic doctrine in this matter, the pope makes the claim once more that 'Catholic wisdom sustained by both divine and natural law prudently provides for the maintenance of public and private tranquillity.'

The subject of this section is then 'the right of ownership and the apportioning of goods necessary to support the needs and conveniences of life.'

The Socialist theory is, firstly, that 'the right of property is of merely human invention,' a thing established by man because man found it useful, or convenient, and, secondly, that it is 'repugnant to the natural equality between men.'

The practical conclusion from these premises is that 'no one

<sup>1</sup> Eph. vi, 7, 9.

should endure poverty meekly, and that all may, with impunity, seize upon the possessions and usurp the rights of the wealthy.'

The Church, 'more wisely and profitably,' recognises the existence of inequality amongst men, who are by nature unlike (1) in mental endowment, (2) in strength of body, (3) in amount of fortune. She teaches that 'the right of property and of its disposal derives from nature.' It should, in the case of every individual, remain untouched and not be violated. Even to covet the goods of others is unlawful.

What about the poor? The Church has never failed to provide for their needs, knowing that they 'in a manner represent the person of Christ Himself, who accounts as done unto Him any benefit conferred on the lowliest of them.' Whence the immense array of hospices, orphanages, refuges and charitable foundations of every kind which the Church has founded and fostered. Whence also her care to 'lay the rich under strict command to give of their superfluity to the poor'; and the pope reminds the rich that 'the divine judgement will exact the penalty of eternal punishment unless they succour the wants of the needy.'

It is in this charitable co-operation, the poor taking their lot in the spirit of Christ, the rich continually assisting them, that 'lies the best means of appeasing the undying conflict.'

Otherwise, either the vast majority of mankind will fall back into the abject condition of slavery, as in pagan times, or society must continue to be disturbed by a succession of revolutions.

Then follows, in conclusion, that appeal to rulers, to protect and foster the Church whose social teaching and precepts are so necessary to the continuance of good order, which has already been quoted in the first paragraphs preceding this summary.

Finally the pope appeals to the bishops. He begs them to renew their zeal for the spread of Catholic doctrine, that all men may, from filial submission to God, come to show due submis-

sion to rulers and the laws. They are to strive earnestly that Catholics may not lend their name, or in any way countenance, the hateful sects whose doctrines the pope has been condemning. And they must encourage associations for workmen, that 'may render them content with their lot and resigned to toil, inducing them to lead a peaceful and tranquil life,' for it is from this class, 'wearied out by sheer hard work,' that Socialism most easily draws recruits.

### THE ENCYCLICAL DIVINI REDEMPTORIS

*Socialism and Communism were regarded by Leo XIII as a menace to civilisation, not only for their false theories about ownership, but also because of the generally false basis that underlies the whole system, a material naturalism, that is to say, and rationalism. It is also with Communism from this point of view—the most important of all—that Pius XI deals in the encyclical Divini Redemptoris, written fifty-nine years after Leo's Quod Apostolici Muneris. The popes had not by any means been silent about the social question during that long interval. They had frequently and faithfully dealt with its different phases, as the encyclicals summarised in this book will show. But during the greater part of that period Communism was little more than the theory of a few extremists. The memory of the bloody excesses of the Paris Commune of 1871—a very recent memory when Leo XIII wrote Quod Apostolici Muneris in 1878—gradually faded, and it was rather a Socialism concerned mainly with schemes to nationalise all the means of production, distribution and exchange, that occupied the attention of the world. The revolutionary tone had wellnigh disappeared; the movement was economic rather than political; its doctrine was not so often proclaimed as the practical corollary of an avowedly materialistic philosophy. Socialism appeared now as a body of proposals, with an economic basis, designed to effect a much-needed improvement in the social structure. And with this Socialism the popes dealt, in masterly*

*fashion, in such letters as the Rerum Novarum<sup>1</sup> (1891) and Quadragesimo Annó (1931). The successful second revolution in Russia in 1917, however—when the Bolsheviks overcame the party which had established a republic in place of the empire of the Tsars—brought Communism in the fullest, most radical sense of the term, into the very forefront of practical international politics. Not since the militant Calvinism of the mid-sixteenth century had Christianity seemed so threatened. This long encyclical of Pius XI, Divini Redemptoris, written after twenty years' study and experience of the new world-force, is an examination that leaves no aspect of Communism untouched, and that is no less searching in its judgement of contemporary Catholicism viewed as a social force. It is an elaborate, and in the English translation a somewhat wordy, document so that an analysis is here particularly desirable. The one which follows is made according to the divisions of the English translation published by the Catholic Truth Society, entitled Atheistic Communism.<sup>2</sup>*

**I. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S ATTITUDE TO COMMUNISM.** *The condemnations of 1846, 1864, 1878; the present pontificate—nine times already; need of yet another pronouncement.*

**II. COMMUNISM, THEORY AND PRACTICE.** *Doctrine—a false ideal; Marxist evolutionary materialism; Man and the family under Communism; Communist society. Why Communism has spread—its alluring promises; Liberalism had already prepared the soil; the systematic propaganda; the silence of the press on the atrocities. Communism's Harvest in Russia, Mexico, Spain, a logical result of the doctrine, i.e., of a system that is by its nature anti-God.*

**III. CATHOLIC AND COMMUNIST TEACHING CONTRASTED.** *God; Man; the Family; Society, i.e., the mutual*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra*, p. 206.

<sup>2</sup> Sold as a pamphlet (52 pages) and also bound up in *Selected Papal Encyclicals and Letters*. Vol. II.

*rights and duties of men, the social economic system, the social hierarchy and the rights of states; superiority of Catholic teaching.*

**IV. PROGRAMME OF DEFENCE AND CHRISTIAN RECONSTRUCTION.** *Renewal of Christian Life, e.g., sincerity in Catholic practice; detachment from worldly goods; practice of Christian charity; practice of justice in the strict sense; practice of social justice. Social Study and Propaganda. Warning against Communist Tactics.*

## **V. AN APPEAL TO ALL MEN OF GOOD WILL.**

### **I. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S ATTITUDE TO COMMUNISM**

DESPITE the marvellous gift to man of a Saviour who was divine, the pope begins, and despite the achievement by His disciples in the centuries that followed, of a civilisation that was Christian, evil still continues its strife with all that is good. The devil remains an active tempter of men; his false promises are still, too often, effective and so, periodically through history, convulsion follows convulsion. Our own age is the scene of a revolution that has gone so far as to produce the most extensive persecution the Church has known. And one result of this revolution—to wit, the triumph of Bolshevistic and Atheistic Communism—is that whole races are in danger of falling back into primitive barbarism.

The popes have seen this menace growing steadily through the last hundred years or so, and they have, from time to time, warned mankind of its approach, Pius IX, for example, in 1846 and again in 1864; Leo XIII in 1878. Pius XI, the author of the present letter, has, no fewer than nine times in fifteen years, spoken in condemnation of the current trend to atheism 'which is alarmingly on the increase,' and of Communism. The time has now come for a special message devoted to this alone.

This encyclical letter will then explain briefly the principles of Atheistic Communism as they are manifested chiefly in Bol-

shevism; explain its method of action; show Catholic doctrine in contrast with it; and say something of the means that must be adopted if Christian civilisation is to be preserved.

## II. COMMUNISM, THEORY AND PRACTICE

THE COMMUNIST DOCTRINE. Ours is an age 'when unusual poverty has resulted from the unfair distribution of the goods of this world.' It is not hard, in such an age, to attract a crowd of followers to any theory which speaks of justice and equality, and brotherhood in work, and which has about it something of a religious enthusiasm. Nevertheless the Communist ideal is only a pseudo-ideal; nor has it been, in Russia, for example, the fruitful ideal that Communists claim. What progress has been made in Russia since the Communists ruled it, can be explained by forces that have nothing to do with Communism, e.g., an intensification of industrialism, new exploitation of immense resources (and the methods used have been inhuman), an extraordinary and brutal pressure on multitudes of workers.

Underneath the seductive trappings of the Communist propaganda lies 'the doctrine of modern Communism . . . in substance based on the principles of dialectical and historical materialism previously advocated by Marx.' This principle is, in brief, that there is nothing in this world that is not matter, and that all matter changes and evolves under the influence of blind forces and by a law of inexorable necessity. Human society is itself nothing but so much matter; and human society, through a conflict of such forces, that never ceases, is gradually moving towards its final state, i.e., a state of things where there shall be no distinction of classes.

Now such a doctrine as this leaves no room for the idea of God, of spirit (and the distinction between spirit and matter, or between body and soul), of survival after death, of a future life.

Communists assert, moreover, that this evolution of society can be hastened by man's action. The means to this end—and

the Communists are devoted to their use—are to sharpen any existing conflict between the various classes, and develop the conflict into a real war. This war—the class-war—is, for the Communist, a holy crusade whose aim is the progress of humanity. Wherefore, all that stands in its way is to be ruthlessly annihilated.

Actually, in practice, Communism destroys man's liberty. Human personality—so it follows from the Communist teaching—is no more than one particular cog in the vast material universe. What others might consider as the rights of human personality are, for the Communist, rights of human society only; rights that can only belong to the community, and not to any individual. Again, for the Communist, all men are absolutely equal; there is no such thing as a natural hierarchy in which one man is superior to his fellows, a natural hierarchy that is of divine institution (like the whole of nature) and upon which authority rests. Authority, for the Communist, derives from the community, and from this alone. Finally, man as such has no right, says the Communist, to own anything as his very own. For property rights are a source of wealth; their possession would give one man power over another, destroying the equality of men. Therefore all forms of private property must go.

Marriage also disappears; for marriage and the family are no more than a matter of the community's arrangement, the outcome of a particular economic system. Marriages are dissoluble at will, and there is no link—beyond what the community devises—to bind woman to home and her children. These last the State can care for, while the mother, should she so choose, can devote herself to public life or collective production.

Education becomes the exclusive prerogative of the community; parents have no influence as parents, but only what influence the State allots to them.

The perfect Communist society, then, would have for its soul and for its single inspiration, the economic system. Its one

purpose would be the production of material things, and the paradise it creates would be a state of things where each would 'give according to his powers' and would 'receive according to his needs.' To achieve this wholly material purpose it is lawful for the community to conscript the entire lives of its citizens. All is right that the State declares to be right; only that is wrong which the State forbids. 'In the Communistic commonwealth, morality and law would be nothing but a derivation from the existing economic order, purely earthly in origin and unstable in character.'

The system is one huge error, one immense illusion, in opposition alike to reason and to divine revelation. For it is destructive of the very foundations of social order; 'it ignores the true origin, nature, and purpose of the State; it denies the rights, dignity, and liberty of human personality.'

WHY COMMUNISM HAS SPREAD. Nevertheless, this system has spread and everywhere it has found men ready to accept it. How is this to be explained?

Too few people have fully grasped the real purposes of Communism. It pretends 'to desire only the betterment of the conditions of the worker, by urging the removal of the very real abuses chargeable to the liberalistic economic order and by demanding a fairer distribution of the good things of the world.' These are undoubtedly lawful objectives. Many are thus attracted to support the movement—people, in many cases, of no ordinary worth. The general confusion in the world of politics, and in the world of thought, favours the growth of the new movement, and especially is the modern university a fruitful soil since nowadays the very idea of God finds no place in university studies.

Liberalism has already prepared the way for the Communist, with the working men, by the religious and moral destitution which it produced. The Sunday rest had gone, and the old holy days also; no one thought of building churches near to

the factories; the work of the clergy was, in fact, actually hindered by the fashionable ideals of Secularism, and it was to a world that Liberalism, so called, had already estranged from Christianity that Communism was introduced.

Next we must allow for the amazing skill of the Communist propaganda and for the 'conspiracy of silence on the part of a large section of the non-Catholic press of the world.'

THE COMMUNIST HARVEST: RUSSIA, MEXICO, SPAIN. It is, in fact, hard to believe, says the pope, that the press, so avid of sensational tales, has been silent by accident about the horrors, perpetrated on so immense a scale, by Communists in Russia, Mexico and Spain. It is a 'short-sighted political policy' that so acts, and 'various occult forces' that have long been planning the destruction of Christian culture, have done much to favour it. The fruits of Communism are evident. In Russia and Mexico its champions openly boast of their efforts 'by every possible means . . . to destroy Christian civilisation and the Christian religion by banishing every remembrance of them from the hearts of men, especially of the young.' Of Spain (where, however, Communism has not been fully triumphant) the same terrible story has to be told. Here, 'as far as possible every church and every monastery was destroyed' and thousands upon thousands of clergy, nuns and laity—women among them—have been tortured and slaughtered, and are, at this moment,<sup>1</sup> still being slaughtered 'for no other offence than the fact that they are good Christians or are at least opposed to Atheistic Communism.' The fate of Spain should make every statesman shudder, and indeed every man of any sense, for this may to-morrow be the fate of his own country too.

Nor are these atrocities a merely transient, chance circumstance; 'they are the natural fruit of a system that lacks all inner restraint.' For the Communist the very Natural Law—that held even the barbaric peoples of old in check—has gone.

<sup>1</sup> March 1937.

Once the idea of God is torn from men's hearts, they are necessarily driven by their passions to the most atrocious cruelties.

The struggle we witness is, in fact, quite simply a duel, planned in cold blood and worked out in detail, between men and 'all that is called God.'<sup>1</sup>

But the end is inevitable. Man cannot reject either God or the Natural Law with impunity. If he does this, Society will dissolve into chaos. Terrorism cannot prevent this, for terrorism cannot prevent moral corruption. Even though Communism has been a contributory factor in rousing Russia from the inertia of centuries, even there, some sense of moral responsibility is called for; and this, no system so thoroughly materialistic as Communism can possibly supply.

The pope has no quarrel with Russia nor with the Russians, who groan beneath the yoke imposed on them. It is the system he blames and that alone; and those who have deliberately devised it and tyrannously imposed it, and who plan to spread the system from one end of the world to the other.

### III. CATHOLIC AND COMMUNIST TEACHING CONTRASTED

How does Communism compare, as a theory, with the true notion of human society, i.e., with that notion as reason and Revelation teach it through the mouth of the Church?

**GOD:** the true notion of human society begins with the fact that above all other reality there is God—a single, supreme being; the all-powerful creator of all else; the all-wise and wholly just judge of all men.

**MAN:** about Man this true doctrine declares that he has a soul that is spiritual and immortal. Man is a person, endowed by God with such gifts that he is really a world in miniature. The ultimate purpose of man's existence, in this life and in the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2 Thess. ii, 4.

next, is God. The grace called sanctifying grace raises man to real kinship with God and makes him a member or cell of the mystical body of Christ. God has endowed man with various prerogatives; he has a right to live, a right to obtain and to possess all that is necessary for his existence, a right to make his way to the ultimate goal God has assigned him, a right to unite with other men, a right to possess and to use things as his very own.

**FAMILY LIFE:** related to this teaching about man is the true teaching about marriage and the family. Marriage, and man's right to the natural use of it, are divine in their origin. It is God who devised the one and instituted the other. And it is God who has fixed the fundamental rights of the family. What these are is explained in the encyclical letters on Marriage and on Education.<sup>1</sup>

**SOCIETY:** man is so constituted that he must live in the company of his fellow-men, in a society. What is the true teaching about human society? 'In the plan of the Creator, society is a natural means, which man can and must use to reach his destined end.'<sup>2</sup> Society is not itself that goal; man is not made for the sake of society, but society for the sake of man. That is to say, it is through being a part of society, and through the mutual aid of all the parts, that each man has the possibility of reaching to earthly happiness. Furthermore, it is in this life with his fellows that man finds the opportunities which develop all his gifts, gifts which reflect the perfection of God Himself. It is only through man's development of these gifts that society can be at all the image of God; 'only man, and not society in any form, is endowed with reason and a free will subject to the moral law.'

Man's need to live in society is part of his divinely given nature, and his obligations towards society are also divinely imposed. The representatives of that society have, therefore, the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra*, pp. 163, 174, 193.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., happiness.

right to compel his obedience where those obligations are concerned. But, on the other hand, society cannot strip man of the God-given rights summarised above, nor can society make it impossible for him to use them.

These questions, of the respective rights of man and of society, have an especial importance if we consider the social and economic organisation of society. The rights of man, in this respect, are set out in detail in the two encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII and *Quadragesimo Anno* of the pope now writing this letter.<sup>1</sup> Here it is shown, among other things, that the way out from the chaos in the social-economic system which an amoral Liberalism has produced, is neither the class-war, nor terror, nor, yet again, State tyranny, but the 'infusion of social justice and Christian love' into that system, and the establishment of 'a sane corporative system.' Mutual harmony between all classes and all interests is the ideal, and it is the chief function of the State to bring about and foster that harmony.

Catholic doctrine, it is not then surprising, defends the dignity and the authority of the State as the protector of rights divine and human. Not all men have equal rights within society; there does exist a lawful, social hierarchy, as Leo XIII has already taught in the encyclicals *Diuturnum Illud* and *Immortale Dei*.<sup>2</sup> But to despoil man of his rights, to make him the slave of the State, to abuse public authority and set up a system of terrorism—this is the very contrary both of natural ethics and of the will of God who created man and the State alike. So, when Communism arrogates to itself the right to enforce its partisan political programme, that derives from an arbitrary human will and is filled with hatred, it is an unjust usurper of the role of the law that that is divine.

SUPERIORITY OF THE CATHOLIC TEACHING: setting side by side the Catholic doctrine and the Communist, we can say of the first that it is removed from all extremes of error, from all

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra*, pp. 206, 225.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 73-84 and 84-102.

partisan exaggeration. It maintains a continuous equilibrium of truth and justice; it harmonises the rights and duties of all parties and sections. Authority is here reconciled with liberty; the dignity of the individual with that of the State; the human personality of the subject with the divine delegation of the superior. The doctrine strikes the needed balance between man's duties to love himself, his family, his country, other families, and other nations. This doctrine fosters a proper regard for the things of this life, while it never neglects the due care for the things that are eternal. Though the Church's first care is 'the Kingdom of God and His justice,' it never ceases to foster civil progress and material improvement, and in the very sphere of social-economics—though carefully eschewing what is not the Church's business, viz., the devising of any definite technical plans—the Church has nevertheless clearly outlined the principles which must guide whatever plans are made if these are to accomplish their aim and bring peace in that sphere.

No one who knows history can deny the fact that the Catholic Church has greatly assisted human progress, by its teaching and by the immense social work that those who have put this teaching into practice have accomplished. The pope cites as examples the vast system of charitable organisations, and the guilds which the medieval Catholics organised and which lost their power for social good in proportion as Catholic doctrine began to be ignored. Leo XIII was well in the tradition when, in opposition to the fashionable ideas of his time and to powerful states, he defended the right of the workers to organise trade unions.

As to rulers and their present anxieties, 'there would be to-day neither Socialism nor Communism if the rulers of the nations had not scorned the teachings and maternal warnings of the Church.' The modern State abandoned Catholicism for Liberalism and Secularism. It banished God from its counsels and refused to recognise the existence of religion. If the fair-seeming edifice it built on such foundations is now in ruins,

whose is the blame? 'Everything must crumble that is not grounded on the one corner stone which is Christ Jesus.'

This admirable Catholic teaching it is which alone can offer real light, and save mankind from the Communist fallacies. But this admirable teaching must be consistently reduced to practice in the life of every day. How this needs to be done, the next—and longest—section of the encyclical will explain.

#### IV. PROGRAMME OF DEFENCE AND CHRISTIAN RECONSTRUCTION

**RENEWAL OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.** The first matter to which Pius XI draws attention is the need, among Catholics themselves, for a real, sincere, spiritual re-birth. 'We cannot deny that there is still much to be done in the way of spiritual renovation. Even in Catholic countries there are still too many who are Catholics hardly more than in name.' The pope has in mind, he says, those Catholics—there are, he says, too many of them—'who fulfil, more or less faithfully, the more essential obligations of the religion they boast of professing, but have no desire to know more about it, or to deepen their inward conviction,' and still less desire to bring into full accord inward belief and external conduct. 'We know how much our Divine Saviour detested this empty pharisaic show.' Catholics of this sort will hardly survive the test of persecution.

There are two doctrines of Our Lord which, especially, have a real importance under present conditions, namely, detachment from earthly goods and the commandment of charity.

As to the first, all should remember to be 'poor in spirit.' The rich must bear in mind that they are only the stewards of what they possess, and that, as stewards, they must one day give an account to their Lord; let them value their wealth as a precious means whereby to do good. The pope recalls the harsh condemnation of Holy Scripture, 'Go to now, ye rich men: weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten;

your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you and shall eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up to yourselves wrath, against the last days. . . .'<sup>1</sup>

The poor have also an opportunity in their special state. It is not wrong for them to strive, by lawful means, to better their position, but they too must remember that the blessed state is to be 'poor in spirit.' Nor will increase of wealth secure them against misery and sorrow. Patience, Christian patience, will always remain a necessity of life.

Still more important than this spirit of detachment is the positive practice of Christian charity, a charity innocent of any 'appearance of humiliating patronage' and of ostentation too. Such organisations as the conferences of St. Vincent de Paul have done and are doing very much indeed to realise this great commandment.

Nevertheless, says the pope, that justice and charity are too little practised is evident to anyone who will note the contrast between the 'thousands of the needy, victims of real misery for various reasons beyond their control' and those many others who spend fortunes on frivolous amusements. 'We cannot fail to remark with sorrow not only that justice is poorly observed, but that the commandment of charity also is not sufficiently appreciated, is not a vital thing in daily life.' Wherefore the pope urges upon the bishops that more and more they will see to it that sermons are preached to explain how the practice of charity is the sign that identifies the Catholic with Christ. Catholics, if they would 'be sure of eternal life and help the poor effectively,' must, in fact, learn anew 'to renounce the joys, often sinful, which the world to-day offers so abundantly, and to forget self for love of the neighbour.' Moreover, there is an inner power in this precept of charity. Whoever is faithful to it will experience in his heart that true peace which the world knows not.

Yet we need to remember that charity cannot exist where

<sup>1</sup> Jas. v, 1-3.

there is injustice. 'A "charity" which deprives the working man of the wages due to him is not charity at all, but only its empty name, and hollow semblance. The wage-earner is not to receive as alms what is his due in justice. And let no one attempt with trifling charitable donations to exempt himself from the great duties imposed by justice.'

For Catholic employers the pope has a special message. He begins by recognising that, often enough, they bear the burden of a heavy heritage from the unjust economic régime of past generations. But he bids them be mindful of their responsibility, and he declares that the evil conduct, in these matters, of certain Catholic employers 'has done much to shake the faith of the working classes in the religion of Jesus Christ.' These groups have refused to recognise those rights which the Church teaches belong to the worker. There were others who combined to prevent the pope's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* from being read in church. Yet again other employers—Catholics—persist in their opposition to a labour movement that the pope has blessed. 'Is it not deplorable that the right of private property defended by the Church should so often have been abused to defraud the working man of his wages and his social rights?'

Besides the obligation of justice in the strict sense—such obligations as those to pay a proper wage—there is also that of social justice. The obligation of social justice—and it falls upon all—is that each shall give his share of what is needed for the common good. Now this is impossible unless each is first of all supplied with all that is necessary for the exercise of his social functions. 'Social justice cannot be said to have been satisfied so long as working men are denied a wage that will enable them to secure proper sustenance for themselves and for their families; so long as they are denied the opportunity of acquiring a modest fortune and avoiding that pauperism which is so widespread; so long as they cannot make suitable provision through public or private insurance for old age, for periods of illness and unemployment.'

'All too frequently, however, individual employers are helpless to ensure justice,' and the pope recommends that they should unite to protect themselves against the unfair competition that would ensue between themselves and such employers as continue to exploit their workmen.

The duties are not, of course, on one side only. The workmen, too, 'must be mindful of their duties of charity and justice,' and understand that to neglect these is also to endanger their own interests.

There will only be peace in the social-economic world when employers and workmen combine in some new form of the old guilds, based on the solid foundation of Christian teaching, as the pope's previous encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*<sup>1</sup> has already stated.

SOCIAL STUDY AND PROPAGANDA. Pius XI, then, is calling for a rebirth of Catholic social activity, and the first requisite, he now proceeds to say, is a more general interest, on the part of Catholics, in the study of social problems in the light of Catholic teaching. Very often the defection of Catholics from their religion has been really due to their lack of knowledge in this respect. 'It is therefore of the utmost importance to foster, in all classes of society, an intensive programme of social education,' and to spread the Church's teaching everywhere.

One good result of this would be the disappearance of a type of Catholic who is 'a scandal to the weak, and to the malicious a pretext to discredit the Church,' the Catholics, namely, 'who while exteriorly faithful to the practice of their religion, yet in the field of labour and industry, in the professions, trade and public offices, permit a deplorable cleavage in their conscience and live a life too little in conformity with the clear principles of justice and Christian charity.'

WARNING AGAINST COMMUNIST TACTICS. The last point in the pope's programme for the defenders of the Catholic recon-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra*, p. 225.

struction of society is a warning against Communist tactics. Communism most skilfully uses the general humanitarian tendency of the time as a cover: the movement for international peace, very notably. Or again, they spread the notion that 'Communism in countries where Christian faith and general culture are most strongly entrenched, will assume another and much milder form. It will not interfere with the practice of religion. It will respect liberty of conscience.'

To all this the Catholic should oppose the fact that 'Communism is intrinsically wrong, and no one who would save Christian civilisation may give it assistance in any undertaking whatever.'

And above all, the most efficacious means is prayer joined with Christian penance. 'This kind is not cast forth but by prayer and fasting.'<sup>1</sup>

#### V. AN APPEAL TO ALL MEN OF GOOD WILL

The last ten pages of the encyclical are a reasoned appeal to all sorts and conditions of men, rallying them to the support of truth against the mischievous Communist errors. To priests Pius XI renews the direction of Leo XIII to go to the working man, and he bids them 'dedicate the better part of their endeavours and their zeal to winning back the labouring masses to Christ and to His Church.'

Next the pope addresses himself to the 'stalwarts of Catholic Action.' Its members must be 'trained with special care,' by 'study circles, social weeks, and lecture courses,' so as to become 'the first and immediate apostles of their fellow-workers,' collaborating 'under the direction of especially qualified priests' in that work of spiritual aid. And there must be propaganda on a large scale to spread the knowledge of Catholic Social teaching.

The different Catholic professional societies should share in this work, and the pope appeals above all to the Catholic

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvii, 20.

workers still loyal to the faith. God's reward for that fidelity is the mission, noble if difficult, of bringing back, to the Church and to God, 'those immense multitudes of their brother workmen who, because they were not understood or treated with the respect to which they were entitled, have strayed in bitterness far from God.' It is in the mines, the factories, and wherever men labour that this apostolate is to be fulfilled.

For Catholics in general the pope has one great message—Union, and to this united fight against the enemies of God the pope invites 'all those . . . who still believe in God and pay Him homage.'

In this great crusade for the cause of God and social order the Christian State has a part to play. The State should be diligent to prevent any anti-God campaign within its borders; it should strive to assure all its citizens proper conditions of life, and especially employment; it should see that the wealthy assume those burdens without which human society cannot be saved, nor the wealthy themselves remain secure; taxation should fall chiefly 'upon those with more than their share of capital resources and who continue to accumulate such resources to the grievous detriment of others.' The State, moreover, should show itself a model of prudent and sober administration. Public officials have a serious obligation in conscience in this matter. And all states should work 'for the earliest possible removal of those artificial barriers [in international trade] to economic life.' They are the effects of distrust and hatred. 'All must remember that the people of the earth form but one family in God.'

Finally the State must allow the Church complete freedom to fulfil its mission. The Catholic Church is pre-eminent among those spiritual and moral forces to which, on all sides, appeal is being made to-day. The very good of humanity demands that its influence be not hampered. To tie up that influence, and hope to restore peace in the social sphere by political or economic measures alone, is to court certain failure. So, to banish religion from the school, and from public life, to allow

the rites and ministers of religion to be mocked with impunity, is to work for the ultimate triumph of materialism and therefore of Communism.

Last of all, before invoking St. Joseph as patron of this new crusade, Pius XI has a kindly word to call back those Catholics who have gone over to the Communist front.

### CHAPTER III

THE STATE AND ITS POWERS: AN ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF THE ENCYCLICALS *DIUTURNUM ILLUD* (29 JUNE 1881) AND *IMMORTALE DEI* (1 NOVEMBER 1885) OF LEO XIII, AND *QUAS PRIMAS* (11 DECEMBER 1925) OF PIUS XI.

#### THE ENCYCLICAL *DIUTURNUM ILLUD*

*Few events ever caused such a general consternation in Europe as the assassination of the Tsar Alexander II in his own capital city on 13 March 1881. Nihilists were responsible for the murder, and it proved to be but the first in a long series of attempts on the lives of Russian princes and officials that went on, henceforward, as long as the imperial régime lasted. For Leo XIII the general alarm was one of those moments that seemed especially suited for Europe to meditate the lesson that princes and peoples have each duties in common to their common lord and master, God Almighty. Already, when condemning in the Quod Apostolici Muneris the theories of those who had now achieved the murder of the all-powerful Tsar, the pope had spoken in general terms of the State's forgetfulness of God. Now he argues in detail the State's duty to acknowledge and obey God's Law, arguing this from the kind of thing the State really is and as a practical result of the truth that all the State's authority comes to it from God. The encyclical is, in fact, a summary treatise on the Catholic teaching about the duties of rulers and peoples. The Latin text bears the simple title De Civili Principatu, which we may translate Civil Sovereignty or The State's Sovereign Power. There is not any English translation in print of this extremely useful*

*and important encyclical. In the Latin it runs to some thirteen pages—about a third as much again as the Quod Apostolici Muneris. It is a very straightforward piece of exposition and analyses easily as follows:*

**I. THE MODERN CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE NATURE AND SOURCE OF THE STATE'S AUTHORITY.**

**II. THE TRUE NATURE AND SOURCE OF THE STATE'S AUTHORITY.**

**III. CRITICISM OF THE NATURALIST THEORY ABOUT THE STATE'S AUTHORITY.**

**IV. HOW THE CATHOLIC TEACHING PROFITS ALL CONCERNED.**

**V. EVIL EFFECTS OF THE NATURALIST THEORY.**

**VI. RELIGION THE ONLY MEANS TO SOCIAL PEACE.**

**VII. THE POPES AS GUARDIANS OF SOCIAL PEACE.**

**I. THE MODERN CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE NATURE AND  
SOURCE OF THE STATE'S AUTHORITY**

RECENT events, says the pope, with a reference to the assassination of the Tsar Alexander II, show that the war so long waged against Catholicism is now beginning to endanger society generally, and in an especial way those who are rulers. The pope proposes to explain the Catholic teaching about the duties of rulers and subjects, and to suggest what is the best way of meeting this new menace: 'What Catholic truth demands of each in this kind of duty . . . in what way and by what system the public well-being can best be safeguarded in the present menacing state of things.'

Authority and obedience to authority, so the pope's argument begins, are in the nature of things. No man can succeed

in so freeing himself that he needs not to obey someone. Society needs a chief to rule it, if it is to achieve the purpose for which it exists.

Yet, although no one has been able to abolish political authority altogether, much has been done to lessen its prestige, and especially during and since the tumult of mischievously novel opinions that marked the sixteenth century. From that time men have usurped a freedom more generous than just; they have set themselves to construct theories about the origins and nature of the State according to their fancy, and even to declare that all authority comes from the people, so that those who exercise authority in the State, do so, as exercising, not what is their own, but what has been entrusted to them by the people; and they exercise the authority in such a way that, at the will of that same people by whom it was entrusted, the authority can be withdrawn.

'Catholics differ from these thinkers, for Catholics trace the right to rule back to God as its natural and necessary source.'

Here it may be noted that it is in no way against Catholic teaching for those at the head of the State to be selected by the will and judgement of the people. 'For such selection points out the ruler; it does not confer the rights of rulership; nor is authority then handed over, but it is determined by whom authority shall be exercised.'

The pope explicitly leaves untouched the question of forms of government; because, to the form (e.g., monarchy or republic) the Church is indifferent, so long as the system is just and aims at the welfare of all.

## II. THE TRUE NATURE AND SOURCE OF THE STATE'S AUTHORITY

The Catholic Church rightly teaches that all political authority comes from God. This teaching the Catholic Church finds openly stated in Sacred Scripture,<sup>1</sup> in the Fathers, e.g.,

<sup>1</sup> The pope quotes Prov. viii, 15, 16; Sap. vi, 3, 4; Eccl. xviii, 14; Joan. xix, 11.

in St. Augustine,<sup>1</sup> St. John Chrysostom,<sup>2</sup> and St. Gregory the Great.<sup>3</sup>

'Nor can any theory be devised, which is more in keeping with reason, or more profitable to the welfare of rulers and people.'

It is man's nature to live in society. God is the author of society. Society needs a chief or chiefs. It is not possible to conceive a society without some depository of power to moderate the wills of the members and direct them to the common good. 'It is therefore the will of God that there should be rulers.'

'Now it is of particular importance that those who exercise authority should be able to compel obedience in such a way that not to obey is plainly sinful. But no man has it in his own power, nor can he so devise, that he is able to restrict the free will of others by binding commands of this sort. For this power belongs to God alone, the universal creator and law maker. It must, then, be that those who exercise this power exercise it as a thing communicated to them by God. And this is seen in every type of authority.'

### III. CRITICISM OF THE NATURALIST THEORY ABOUT THE STATE'S AUTHORITY

Leo XIII now criticises the theory that society arises from the common consent of its members, and that authority has the same origin, each member, that is to say, surrendering a part of his rights, by a pact, and willing to put himself under the power of him to whom the sum of these rights may come.

This theory disregards the fact that, independent of all choice, man is social by his nature.

'Moreover this pact is an evident invention, nor could it avail to give to political authority that degree of force, prestige, and strength which is needed for the protection of the State and the common well being. Rulership will only possess all the

<sup>1</sup> *The City of God*, book 5, ch. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, 23rd Homily, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Letters*, book 2, letter 61.

dignity and safeguards that it needs if it is understood as a thing which emanates from God, the most august and holy of all sources.'

#### IV. HOW THE CATHOLIC TEACHING PROFITS ALL CONCERNED

This is the Christian idea; 'it is the true idea; it is also the most helpful idea that can be thought of.'

It is helpful to the prestige of the ruler.

'If authority is something passed on to the ruler from God, it attains immediately a worth that is more than human': not, of course, that it is divine in the absurd sense of the pagan emperors of old. But it will be for 'citizens to submit to their rulers as to God, that is to say, not so much from fear of penalties as out of reverence for authority; not in a spirit of adulation but from an awareness of duty.' Belief in this Christian theory is bound to create such a mentality that 'citizens will shun sedition and rebellion, for the conviction must possess them that whoever resists the authority of the State resists an authority that is divine; that whoever refuses honour to rulers, refuses to honour God Himself.'<sup>1</sup>

The sole reason that justifies a refusal to obey is that what is commanded 'openly conflicts with the natural law or the law of God.'<sup>2</sup> Those who, faced with such a choice, prefer to obey God rather than the State are not to be taxed with failing in obedience. For when the will of the State conflicts with the will of God or God's laws, the State is overstepping the limits of its authority and is perverting justice: nor can the State's power be effective in such a case, for where there is no justice there is no power.'

The theory is helpful towards just government.

'One very great means by which justice is preserved in states is the rulers' realisation that their authority is not a thing destined for any man's private profit; that the State is to be man-

<sup>1</sup> The pope quotes here Rom. xiii, 1, 2, 5; 1 Pet. ii, 13, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Matt. xxii, 21, and Acts v, 29.

aged in the interests of those committed to the rulers, and not of the rulers to whom the State is committed. Rulers must take example from God, from whom the authority they exercise is given. They must have God ever in their minds and rule their peoples with justice and faith, and when severity is needed temper it with fatherly love.' Rulers will one day have to render an account to God, the ruler of rulers. 'If they have betrayed their trust, they cannot hope in any way to escape God's severity.'<sup>1</sup>

The theory is helpful to the self-respect of the citizen.

'For in giving obedience such as this teaching directs, citizens lose none of that self-respect which is a proper part of man's worth as a human being. For such citizens understand that in God's sight there is neither slave nor free man; that there is but one Lord of all, "rich unto all that call upon Him";<sup>2</sup> and that they are subject to, and must obey, rulers because in some sense rulers reflect the image of God "to serve whom is to reign."'

The Church has always striven so that this Christian theory about political authority should be evident in the public action of Catholics, and not be a matter to which they give any merely internal assent. This was its way of acting even in the time of the pagan Roman emperors.<sup>3</sup> Not even the persecutions shook the loyalty to the State of these early Christians; nor did the persecutions prevent them from serving in the armies. When put to the test by commands that were sinful 'they preferred to leave the army and to be put to death for religion rather than by sedition and riots to resist the authority of the State.'

Once the rulers were Christian, even more insistent was the care of the Church to have it declared that the authority they bore was a sacred thing; whence came the ceremony of consecrating new kings, and the institution of the Holy Roman Empire. If only princes and peoples had risen to the ideal set

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., Sap. vi, 4, 5, 6, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. x, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Leo XIII here quotes Tit. iii, 1; Tim. ii, 1-3; Athenagoras and Tertullian and the author of the Letter to Diognetus.

before them by the Church! Even so, as long as Church and Empire were friendly, what happiness the world enjoyed!

#### V. EVIL EFFECTS OF THE NATURALIST THEORY

On the other hand, the newly contrived theories about the authority of the State have already brought great bitterness to mankind, and they threaten bitterness greater still.

'For, to refuse to acknowledge God as the author of political authority is nothing else than to will that political authority be stripped alike of its glory and its strength.' To make authority a product of the people's decision, is to give rulership a foundation that is altogether too slender and unstable.

Such theories encourage all that is most volatile and least subordinate in the people, and the danger of blind tumults and rebellion must increase wherever these theories are popularised.

History shows how the Reformation, whose leaders made use of these new theories, was accompanied by rebellions and especially in Germany. Then, 'From that heresy there issued, in the last century, the falsely styled Philosophy and the so-called "new jurisprudence," the rule of the people and that licence which knows no bounds—which is all that many people understand by liberty.' And finally, from these we have come to the last of all the plagues, to Communism, Socialism and Nihilism: 'terrible portents indeed, threatening well nigh the end of civil society. And yet only too many have striven to increase the power of these great evils, and under the pretence of helping the populace, have already lighted enormous fires of wickedness.'

#### VI. RELIGION THE ONLY MEANS TO SOCIAL PEACE

The most serious feature of the situation is that 'rulers do not possess means really suited to restore public discipline, and to pacify the spirit of their peoples.' They rely on the severity of their penal laws to coerce the disturbers. The difficulty here is that penalties will never have such force that they can, of

themselves, keep states safe. 'Fear,' the pope quotes from St. Thomas Aquinas,<sup>1</sup> 'is a weak foundation: for those who are brought under by fear, will revolt all the more readily, once an opportunity offers itself of doing so unpunished, according as they have been coerced, by fear alone, against their wills.' Moreover, 'from overmuch fear, many fall into desperation: and desperation drives men more boldly to new revolts.'

Obedience can only be secured by motives of a higher order. Severity in the laws is without effect unless men are moved by a sense of duty, and the saving fear of God. Now to obtain such obedience from them is especially the effect of religion. For the force of religion affects the minds of men, and bends their wills so that they are not only obedient to their rulers, but also bound to them by friendly affection. 'It is religion which, in every society, is the best guardian of public safety.'

#### VII. THE POPES AS GUARDIANS OF SOCIAL PEACE

The popes must therefore be adjudged singularly useful servants of society for the care they have ever given to check the violent restless minds of religious revolutionaries, and for their ceaseless warnings that these men are dangerous enemies to society also. For a like reason we must praise the courage and foresight of the popes who did their best to prevent the spread of secret societies, especially Clement XII, Benedict XIV and Leo XII: Leo XIII repeats their warning. Once more he offers the Church as a much-needed protection to the rulers of Europe and begs them in God's name to defend religion and, for the sake of the State itself, to allow the Church full freedom of action.

Neither rulers nor peoples have any reason to fear or to hate the Church. To rulers it is a reminder to follow justice and to stand to their duty, and at the same time it greatly strengthens their authority. Civil matters it acknowledges, and expressly declares, to be matters solely for the power of the State. Mat-

<sup>1</sup> *De Regimine Principum*, Book I, c. 10.

ters which, from one point of view, are civil and from another religious, the Church would have arranged by concordats and so avoid all chance of friction.

As to the peoples—the Church is the mother of all mankind and man's salvation is the one reason for her existence. It is the Church which, through her gift of charity, tempers man's harshness, makes manners human, laws equitable; and the Church, nowhere an enemy to decent freedom, has ever been wont to detest the rule of tyrants.

In conclusion, Leo XIII addresses a terse admonition to the bishops to see that the Catholic teaching on authority and the duty of obedience to it is preached, and preached as something to be practised. The pope bids them see to it that Catholics are warned to avoid secret societies, conspiracies and seditious movements; to see to it also that they understand the religious character of their obedience in civil matters. Finally, since it is God who gives to kings salvation <sup>1</sup> and to their peoples the grace to sit in the beauty of peace <sup>2</sup> the pope renews his exhortations to prayer.

### THE ENCYCLICAL IMMORTALE DEI

*This encyclical is generally held to be one of the three most important of all the long series written by Leo XIII; the other two being the Aeterni Patris (of 4 August 1879) on the study of Thomistic Philosophy <sup>3</sup> and the Rerum Novarum.<sup>4</sup>*

*Immortale Dei is really the first part of a trilogy, Libertas Præstantissimum and Sapientiæ Christianæ forming, as it were, practical sequels to it. To see all three letters for what they are, namely, a most important element in the pope's masterly effort*

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxliii, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Is. xxxii, 18.

<sup>3</sup> *De Colenda S. Thomæ Philosophia*, Acta Leonis XIII, Bruges, 1887, Vol. 1, pp. 88-110: English translation in MARITAIN, *St. Thomas Aquinas*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *infra*, p. 206.

*to reconcile the modern world to religion, something needs to be known of the historical background against which they appeared: otherwise the reader risks seeing the pope as one beating the air.*

*France in 1885<sup>1</sup> was, and had been for a generation, the principal theatre of a bitter discussion between Catholics about a politico-religious problem in which the whole Church was interested, and upon which the future fate of the Church in all democratic countries largely turned. Leo XIII, intervening authoritatively in 1885, would not only point a way to peace among the Catholics of France, but forestall similar destructive, nay suicidal, conflicts in other parts of the world and also put beyond all doubt the right, and the duty even, of the modern Catholic to be a full loyal citizen of the modern state.*

*For it was with the Catholic's relation to the modern state that these bitter controversies were all concerned, using the term 'modern state' to mean that system of government and view of its functions, and of social institutions which was first realised with the French Revolution. In this 'modern state' the country is ruled chiefly by some kind of elected parliament; it is indifferent to religious questions and professes neither to support nor to suppress any particular creed or cult; public education is the business of the State and at its charge, and it is non-religious; the State recognises as valid only those marriages which are contracted according to its own regulations; it provides means for divorce and the re-marriage of those divorced; there is a right of free speech, books and newspapers are uncensored. The system is founded on the so-called 'principles of 1789,' and during the nineteenth century it spread pretty well all over western Europe, and in all the countries western Europe had colonised. The 'principles of 1789,' to which in these encyclicals such constant reference is made, find their classic expression in the famous Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen voted by the National Assembly of France, 28*

<sup>1</sup> The encyclical is dated Nov. 1, 1885.

*August 1789, and prefixed to the French Constitution of 1791.<sup>1</sup> These rights, 'liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression,' are there set forth as 'natural, inalienable and sacred,' and their maintenance is declared to be the reason why political associations exist. The source of all sovereignty, it is stated, is the nation; and Law is whatever the nation as a whole wills. Liberty is the power to do whatever does not injure another, and Law has no right to interfere with activities that do not harm society. Every man has the right freely to set forth his thoughts and opinions; this is in fact 'one of the most precious rights of man.' Any state which does not provide a guarantee for these rights is not really possessed of a state's authority.*

*In all the countries where the old absolutist monarchies were replaced by new systems based on this particular philosophy, Catholics were soon acutely divided by their practical judgement about the wisdom of the new regimes, and also about their lawfulness. The question was, in fact, not only would they work, but were they right? Could a good Catholic help to work them? or was he not rather bound to work for their overthrow?*

*Nowhere was this division among Catholics more acute than in France, and nowhere was the division of greater consequence to the Church as a whole. France, in the lifetime of Leo XIII, had been in turn an empire (under Napoleon I), a kingdom tending towards a nullification of 1789 (under the restored Bourbons), a kingdom with a pseudo-acceptance of 1789 (under the 'citizen-king' Louis-Philippe), a republic dedicated to 1789, an absolutist empire once again (under Napoleon III) and, finally, it was now (in 1885) a republic for the third time, a republic directed by militantly anti-Catholic disciples of the creed of the Rights of Man. It was a natural result of all this political turbulence—five revolutions in fifty-five years—that the body of French Catholics included ardent*

<sup>1</sup> The text of the Declaration is not readily accessible in English works. Abbot Butler prints a translation of it in his most useful study, *The Catholic Church and Modern Civilisation*, published in EYRE, *European Civilisation, Its Origin and Development*, Vol. VI, pp. 1360-1.

*partisans of all the various monarchist and imperial regimes, all of whom were enthusiastic critics of the republican ideal (and opponents of the republican regime) and no less enthusiastic (it is a polite adjective) critics of one another. Since 1879 this Third Republic had shown itself increasingly hostile to Catholic ideals, and, if electoral victories were any criterion, increasingly popular with the French people as a whole. The pope must, then, somehow, preserve the Catholicism of the French people under a political regime which had, it seemed, come to stay but which, however, leading French Catholics, for the most part, refused to recognise and against which they never ceased, impotently enough, to strive and to fight. This was, in some respects, the major task of Leo's long pontificate.*

*Some of the French Catholics desired to overthrow the republic for political reasons; others, for religious reasons, considering it to be anti-Christian inevitably and necessarily. Very few Catholics indeed were republican in sympathy, and the chief object of the animosity of the militantly anti-republican Catholics was not the small group of Catholic republicans but the numerous party of moderates who, while never accepting the political philosophy of the victorious republicans, aimed at a modus vivendi with the republic. Catholics, this party thought, should live a full civic life in the anti-Christian republic and, by using their rights, influence its legislation in a Christian sense. To those whose motto was 'No truce with Hell—Hell being the Third Republic and all its works and pomps—such a position was anathema; the Catholics who accepted it were bad Catholics, the worst indeed of all, and the 'ultras' spoke and wrote of them with the greatest bitterness. In this mêlée, clergy and laity, priests and bishops too, all joined, while the common enemy, of course, went steadily on towards his goal.*

*It was only after long study of every aspect of the French scene, after sounding the chiefs of the different Catholic factions, that Leo XIII gave his directions in the Immortale Dei. With the other encyclicals of the trilogy it may be thought to*

*make up the Magna Carta of the Catholic who believes in democracy as a good system of government, for it not only authorises his co-operation in the government of states whose constitution is based on principles far from Catholic, but it gives him a light so to order his action that in co-operating he need never fear lest his Catholic principles be compromised. The encyclical is closely reasoned and the pope's actual words are so extremely important that the summary is, this time, for the most part, made up of them. Here is an analysis of the letter.*

**I. THE IDEAL CHRISTIAN STATE:** *i.e., the State as it would be were it established on, and governed by, the principles of Christian Philosophy.*

*(1) God the source of the State's authority. (2) God the Pattern for the exercise of this authority. (3) The State acknowledges the Duty it owes to God and to Religion. (4) The State recognises and protects the Church. (5) The harmonious correlation of the double sovereignty of Church and State over the citizen.*

**II. THE STATE WHICH MODERN THEORIES HAVE CREATED:** *historical origin of the theories: comparison with the Catholic theory in regard to matters dealt with in the first section.*

*Four leading Modern Theses specially examined, namely: (1) Sovereignty resides in the multitude. (2) All religions are equally good and true. (3) Unrestricted freedom to think and publish whatever each one likes, is a good thing and one of man's natural rights. (4) The Church ought to be subject to the State, or Church and State wholly separated. What exactly is taught through these condemnations: eight points noted. What is not condemned: five points noted.*

**III. TWELVE PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS FOR THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN.**

## I. THE IDEAL CHRISTIAN STATE

THE introductory paragraphs of the encyclical recall the Church's historic role as the mother of civilisation, stating eloquently the theme, so dear to Leo XIII, that although the Church was founded to save souls (as its natural purpose), 'Yet in regard to things temporal she is the source of benefits as manifold and as great as if the chief end of her existence were to ensure the prospering of our earthly life. . . . All nations which have yielded to her sway have become eminent for their culture, their sense of justice, and the glory of their high deeds.'

And yet the old reproach continues to be made, namely (1) 'that the Church is opposed to the lawful aims of the civil government,' and (2) 'the Church is wholly unable to help in promoting that welfare and progress which is sought after by every well regulated State.' It is an old reproach, and fifteen hundred years ago St. Augustine dealt with it in masterly fashion in his book *On the City of God*.

Despite the stores of Christian wisdom in such a work, and the refutation made there of the charge, a refutation which might have been deemed sufficient 'for all future times,' the desire still persists to build states on foundations other than Christian. The pope proposes to contrast with the teaching of the Catholic Church the new theories of law now fashionable and the new theories as to what the State is, and about the source of its authority and the extent of its power.

In this first main section of the encyclical the following points are discussed: the source of the State's authority, the duties of rulers and subjects, the attitude of the State to religion and to the only true religion (i.e., to the Catholic Church), the relations between Church and State.

GOD IS THE SOURCE OF THE STATE'S AUTHORITY. Man, by his nature, needs to live in society. A society cannot hold together

unless there is over it some directing person, i.e., a ruling authority.

The origin of society is in human nature, and in human nature lies the origin of ruling authority.

But the author of nature is God. Hence it is from God that all public power proceeds. Whoever it is that holds the right to govern, holds it from one sole and single source, namely God, the Sovereign Ruler of all.

This right of government that comes from God is not, however, bound up with any special form or system of government, i.e., it does not necessarily imply either a monarchy or a republic, a democratic state or an autocratic state, an oligarchy or an aristocracy.

One thing alone is necessary, namely, the nature of the government must be such that it ensures the general welfare.

GOD IS THE PATTERN FOR THE STATE'S EXERCISE OF ITS AUTHORITY. The State must remember that God is the pattern ruler according to whom it must shape its own ruling. Those who exercise authority in the State 'should, in some measure, reflect the divine power and providence over the human race.'

They should rule 'not as masters but rather as fathers, . . . for the well-being of the citizen, because they who govern others possess authority solely for the welfare of the State.'

They should remember that God will one day severely punish unjust rulers—those rulers, that is to say, who are 'subservient to the advantage of particular individuals,' or who 'govern overbearingly, or arrogantly,' or with measures 'hurtful to the people.' Holy Scripture warns rulers that the mighty shall be mightily tormented.<sup>1</sup>

If only citizens are convinced that the authority with which their rulers rule comes from God, and that to obey them is a matter of justice and a duty, their homage is bound to be willing and dutiful.

Also, it follows that, 'to despise legitimate authority, in

<sup>1</sup> Wis. vi, 7.

whomsoever vested, is unlawful,' for it is 'a rebellion against the Divine Will.' 'To cast aside obedience by popular violence, to incite to revolt, is therefore treason, not against man only, but against God.'

THE STATE ACKNOWLEDGES THE DUTY IT OWES TO GOD AND TO RELIGION. One very important consequence of the divine origin of the State's authority is that the State must make public acknowledgement of the links that bind it to God. This duty the State discharges 'by the public profession of religion.'

Just as men owe this debt to God as individuals, so they owe it collectively as a community. For 'Society, no less than individuals, owes gratitude to God, who gave it being and maintains it, and whose ever-bounteous goodness enriches it with countless blessings.'

Therefore, 'it is a public crime to act as though there were no God, . . . [and] it is a sin in the State not to have a care for religion, as though this were something beyond its scope, or of no practical benefit; or, out of many forms of religion, to adopt that one which chimes in with the fancy. . . . For we are bound absolutely to worship God in that way which He has shown to be His will.' <sup>1</sup>

Therefore it is one of the ruler's chief duties to favour and protect religion, and not to enact laws 'that may compromise its safety.'

Also, since it is the ruler's duty to look to the welfare of the subject, and since this welfare means, ultimately, the subject's happiness in heaven, 'since upon this depends the full and perfect happiness of mankind, the securing of this end should be, of all imaginable interests, the most urgent.'

Hence governments should never hinder, but in every way make easier, the religious life of their subjects, for the practice of religion 'is the link connecting man with God.'

<sup>1</sup> Men's duty is to cling to religion, says the pope, 'not such religion as they may have a preference for, but the religion which God enjoins and which certain and most clear marks show to be the only one true religion.'

THE STATE RECOGNISES AND PROTECTS THE CHURCH. Religion is not, however, the mere individual sentiment in a particular citizen's mind. It is the *true* religion, i.e., that religion organised by Christ Our Lord in the Catholic Church, organised by God's will as a public society, therefore, with its hierarchy of officials, one of them 'the head of all, the chief and unerring teacher of truth,' a religion endowed by God with real authority over the mass of the believers, a society that cannot 'be looked upon as inferior to the State, or in any way dependent upon it.'

From this fact many questions arise of great practical importance, at the root of which is the principle by which the claims of these two authorities—ecclesiastical and civil—over the same set of human beings are to be adjusted.

The Church is, as it were, a State for spiritual matters. To it Christ Our Lord gave 'unrestrained authority in regard to things sacred . . . with the power of making laws, as also with the twofold right of judging and of punishing, which flows from that power.'

'It is the Church, and not the State, that is to be man's guide to Heaven. It is to the Church that God has assigned the charge of seeing to, and legislating for, all that concerns religion . . . of administering freely and without hindrance, in accordance with her own judgement, all matters that fall within her own competence.'

The Church has always claimed this authority, and has always exercised it, and princes and rulers have acknowledged it, in theory and in practice, e.g., 'in the making of treaties . . . in the sending and receiving of ambassadors, and in the interchange of other kinds of official dealings, they have been wont to treat with the Church as with a supreme and legitimate power.'

God's providence also provided this power of the Church 'with a civil sovereignty as the surest safeguard of its independence.'

THE HARMONIOUS CORRELATION OF THE DOUBLE SOVEREIGNTY OF CHURCH AND STATE. God has then arranged that two authorities shall have charge over the human race, the ecclesiastical and the civil, the one for divine things, the other for human things.

‘Each authority’—i.e., Church or State—‘in its kind is supreme. Each has fixed limits within which it is contained; . . . there is an orbit traced out within which the action of each is brought into play by its own native right.’

But since the subjects of the one power are the same human beings who are the subjects of the other, and since one and the same matter might appear to belong to the jurisdiction of both, God was bound to provide a means of avoiding conflict between the two powers—otherwise we should have been faced with the situation of two powers, each of divine origin, commanding contrary things, and man, for whose sake both have been set up, ‘would hesitate in anxiety and doubt, not knowing which course to follow.’

The nature and scope of the divinely established correlation of Church and State—which ensures that such real conflicts of rights shall never arise—is determined by (1) the nature and (2) the relative excellence of the two powers.

‘Whatever in things human is of a sacred character, whatever belongs (1) either of its own nature or (2) by reason of the end to which it is referred, to the salvation of souls or to the worship of God, is subject to the power of the Church.’

‘Whatever is to be ranged under the civil and political order is rightly subject to the civil authority.’

‘Another method of concord’ is for the State and the Holy See to come to a definite understanding—e.g., in a concordat—about their respective rights in particular matters.

Such is the Catholic ideal. In a State so constituted the rights of the citizens are assured, their duties wisely traced out, their persons and possessions protected. And family life being based on the firm foundation of the indissoluble union of husband

and wife, due honour is assured to the woman and the man's authority is exercised after the pattern of God's rule, the power of the father being moderated by regard for the dignity of the mother and the welfare of the children. In public affairs the laws aim at securing the good of all. 'They are not framed according to the delusive caprices and opinions of the mass of the people, but by truth and by justice.' The rulers are honoured because their authority is divine in its origin, and the citizens obey more readily since it is not men they obey but God acting through men. 'Obedience is not the servitude of man to man, but submission to the will of God, exercising His sovereignty through the medium of men.'

## II. THE STATE WHICH MODERN THEORIES HAVE CREATED

The pope, before proceeding to the second part of his task, namely, to set forth and to criticise those new theories of the State according to which the public life of modern Europe is in fact generally organised, speaks briefly of the witness of history to the happiness, and temporal prosperity also, of the world in the days when states were constituted after the pattern he has described, and when the lives of rulers and people were inspired by Catholic ideals.

All went well, Leo XIII says in effect, until the agreement between Church and State broke down, and he quotes the great medieval canon lawyer, St. Ivo of Chartres, to this effect: 'When kingdom and priesthood are at one, in complete accord, the world is well ruled, and the Church flourishes, and brings forth abundant fruit. But when they are at variance, not only smaller interests do not prosper, but even things of greatest moment fall into deplorable decay.'

How did these new theories arise? In the rage for novelty, in ideas and ideals, which reached its climax in the sixteenth century. This passion for change threw into confusion the Christian religion, invaded the precincts of philosophy, spread

thence into all classes of society and it has finally showed itself in all the unbridled licence of the succession of revolutions from 1789 onwards.

The so-called 'new jurisprudence'—this new conception of the nature and function of law—is, on many points, at variance not only with Catholic ideals but even with the natural law itself.

For the main principle of this new theory 'lays down that as all men are alike by race and nature, so in like manner all are equal in the control of their life; that each one is so far his own master as to be in no sense under the rule of any other individual; that each is free to think on every subject just as he may choose, and to do whatever he may like to do; that no man has any right to rule over other men.'

'Government, in a society based on such maxims, is nothing more nor less than the will of the people, and the people . . . is its own ruler. Government is not so much a ruler as an administrator acting in the people's name.

In this system 'the authority of God is passed over in silence—as if there were no God, or as if He cared nothing for human society, or as if men . . . owed nothing to Him, or as if there could be a government whose whole origin and power did not reside in God Himself.'

A State, in this conception of things, is thus no more than 'a multitude which is its own master and ruler.' And 'it follows that the State does not consider itself bound by any kind of duty to God.'

For example, it makes no public profession of religion; it refuses to consider itself obliged to enquire which of the very many is God's religion; or to prefer this to the rest; or indeed to show special favour to any religion. On the contrary, the new State 'is bound to grant equal rights to every creed, so that public order may not be disturbed' by any one of them.

There are other consequences of this theory; religious questions are held to be wholly a matter of private judgement; the judgement of the individual conscience is deemed independent

of all law; any opinions about worship may lawfully be publicly expressed; 'everyone has unbounded licence to think whatever he chooses and to publish abroad whatever he thinks.'

How must the Church fare in such a regime?

First of all the Church is regarded as not different in kind from any other association, as no more than a private club. Its unique nature, its divine origin, its divinely given authority and powers, its purpose and mission of teaching all nations—all these are ignored.

Secondly, in all these matters where, as has been explained, the twofold jurisdiction of Church and State overlaps, the State, ignoring the Church entirely, settles the question by laws of its own enacting.

Examples of this are the State regulation of marriage, and the sequestration of ecclesiastical property, made under the pretext that the Church cannot possess property.

The Church, in such a system, possesses no legal rights *as the Church*. Her very corporate life only continues by virtue of the State's favour, as a concession of State Law.

There are, indeed, states where the Church has retained her proper status, by virtue of agreements publicly entered into by the two powers. But, very often, this is made the occasion for a campaign to separate Church and State. And when the Church resists—as resist she must, for she is 'unable to abandon her chiefest and most sacred duties'—and asks for the fulfilment of the pledges made to her, there begins very frequently a kind of war in which the weaker power is commonly beaten.

Indeed, in the new type of state 'it has become the practice and determination' either to forbid the action of the Church altogether or to keep the Church in check and bondage to the State.

The pope gives, as examples of this plan 'to paralyse the action of Christian institutions, to cramp to the utmost the freedom of the Catholic Church,' the new institution of secular education, the spoliation and suppression of religious orders,

and the overthrow of the temporal power of the Roman Pontiff.

These new theories stand condemned from the point of view of natural reason, for it is nature itself which, in the first place, bears witness that all power has its origin from God. And Leo XIII shows this by an examination of four leading theses of the new system.

FIRST OF ALL, 'the sovereignty of the people . . . this without any reference to God, is held to reside in the multitude.' It is a natural conclusion from this, and many hold it 'as an axiom of civil jurisprudence,' that to foster seditions is not unlawful. If indeed, 'princes are nothing more than delegates chosen to carry out the will of the people . . . it necessarily follows that all things are as changeable as the will of the people so that risk of public disturbance is ever hanging over our heads.'

SECONDLY, all religions, it is said, are equally good or true. This ends, in practice, with the rejection of all religion; it is, indeed, 'the same thing as atheism.' It is contrary to reason to hold that all religions, no matter how contrary to each other, are 'equally probable, equally good and equally acceptable to God.'

THIRDLY, unrestricted freedom to think and to publish 'whatsoever each one likes without any hindrance' is urged as a good thing and one of man's natural rights. It is, on the contrary, an unreasonable thing, for many evils are bound to flow from it. 'Whatever is opposed to virtue and truth may not rightly be brought temptingly before the eye of man, much less be sanctioned by the favour and the protection of the law.' 'The State is acting against the laws and dictates of nature whenever it permits licence of opinion and of action to lead minds astray from truth, and souls away from the practice of virtue,' for 'a well-spent life is the only passport to heaven, whither all are bound.'

'It is a grave and fatal error to exclude the Church' from the

business of life, from legislation, from the family, for 'a State from which religion is banished can never be well regulated.' The only true teacher of virtue and morals is the Church of Christ, for 'she it is who preserves in their purity the principles from which duties flow.'

FOURTHLY, it is held that the Church should be subject to the State in the exercise of her duty. But this is contrary to reason; for thus things natural would be placed above things supernatural, and the general order would be so seriously disturbed that chronic contention would henceforth be inevitable.

Naturally these new theories, 'which cannot be approved by the human reason and most seriously affect' the whole life of the State, have been repeatedly condemned by the Church; and Leo XIII cites here the famous encyclical *Mirari Vos* (15 August 1832) of Gregory XVI and the Syllabus of Pius IX (8 December 1864) as examples of such condemnation.

WHAT EXACTLY IS TAUGHT. The pope proceeds to explain more precisely what it is that has been taught (and so what has been condemned) on these occasions. 'The origin of public power is to be sought for in God Himself and not in the multitude.'

'It is repugnant to reason to allow free scope for sedition.'

'It is not lawful for the State . . . to disregard all religious duties.'

'It is not lawful for the State . . . to hold in equal favour different kinds of religion.'

'The unrestrained freedom of thinking and of openly making known one's thoughts is not inherent in the rights of citizens.'

'The Church no less than the State itself is a perfect society in its own nature and its own right.'

Civil rulers 'ought not so to act as to compel the Church to become subservient or subject' to the State, nor should they hamper the Church's freedom to manage her own affairs.

In matters of mixed jurisdiction there should be no separa-

tion of Church and State, but complete harmony should be preserved between them.

WHAT IS NOT CONDEMNED. In all this, the pope proceeds to point out, there is no condemnation of any one particular form of government, e.g., republic or monarchy. 'All of them are capable, if wisely and justly managed, of ensuring the welfare of the State.'

Nor 'is it blameworthy in itself, in any manner, for the people to have a greater or less share in the government.' Such participation may even, sometimes, be a duty for the people.

Nor is the Church a foe to liberty. Whilst she 'deems it unlawful to place various forms of Divine Worship on the same footing as the true religion, she does not, on that account, condemn those rulers who, for the sake of securing some great good, or of hindering some great evil, tolerate in practice that these various forms of religion have a place in the State.' And Leo XIII reminds all that it is Catholic teaching that 'no one shall be forced to embrace the Catholic faith against his will,' for, as St. Augustine says, 'Man cannot believe otherwise than of his own free will.'

While 'the Church cannot approve of that liberty which begets a contempt of the most sacred laws of God,' she approves most highly genuine liberty—i.e., that liberty which 'does not allow the individual to become the slave of error and passion . . . and which guides citizens in wisdom . . . and protects the State from foreign interference.'

It is not true that 'the Church is jealous of modern political systems,' any more than it is true that 'she repudiates the discoveries of modern research.' On the contrary, in all truth that is reached by research the Church recognises traces of the divine intelligence. Whatsoever extends the range of knowledge the Church will always joyfully welcome. Should the human intellect discover anything not known before, the Church makes no opposition. She never objects to any search being made for things that minister to the refinements and comforts

of life. It is indolence and sloth that the Church fights as enemies. Every kind of art and handicraft finds in her an encouraging patron.

'Our eyes are not closed to the spirit of the times,' says Leo XIII, in a phrase that sums up the whole spirit of his reign. 'We do not repudiate the assured and useful improvements of our age, but devoutly we wish that affairs of state might take a safer course than they are now taking, and rest on a firmer foundation without injury to the true freedom of the people. For the best parent and guardian of liberty amongst men is truth. "The truth shall make you free."' <sup>1</sup>

### III. TWELVE PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS

Between the Catholic ideal and the State in which the Catholic of to-day actually lives, there are great divergencies. Is the Catholic to play no part in the life of the modern state? To boycott public life and let the bad grow worse until some catastrophe wrecks the whole structure? Or is he bound in conscience to be an active revolutionary of the right? In these directions Leo XIII shows how fidelity to the Catholic ideal can be combined with a loyal recognition of the new state as the country's lawful government. Whatever the popes 'have hitherto taught, or shall hereafter teach, must be held with a firm grasp of the mind, and so often as occasion requires, must be openly professed.' With regard to the so-called modern 'liberties' our judgement must be that of the Apostolic See. 'Let no one be deceived by the outward appearance of these liberties,' but reflect on their origin. Everywhere, these 'liberties' have borne fruits which good and wise men must deplore. 'The modern form of government just described' is indeed preferable to a state of things where wanton and tyrannical war is waged against Christianity—but that is all that can be said for it. 'The principles on which it is grounded,' the pope repeats, 'are of a nature which no one can approve.'

<sup>1</sup> John viii, 32.

In private affairs, to obey the Gospel precepts is our first rule. And we are bound to love the Church, to promote her honour, defend her rights and bring it about that others respect and love her too.

Catholics should play their part 'in the business of municipal administration.' It is for the public good that they should endeavour to bring about the establishment of religious education. Catholics should also extend their efforts to the field of national politics. 'If they hold aloof, men whose principles offer but small guarantee for the welfare of the State will the more readily seize the reins of government.'

This last recommendation is qualified by a reference to Italy, where, at this time, to avoid anything which might be interpreted as a papal condonation of the usurpation of 1870, which still maintained all its anti-papal violence, Catholics were forbidden to take part in national politics.

In this task of living active Catholic lives in states constituted on the new non-Christian principles, Catholics should be mindful of their early Christian ancestors, who succeeded heroically in a similar task but under conditions immeasurably more hostile.

Catholics, then, are (*a*) 'to make use of popular institutions, so far as this can honestly be done, for the advancement of truth and righteousness'; (*b*) 'to strive that liberty of action shall not transgress the bounds marked out by nature and the law of God,' and (*c*) 'to endeavour to bring back all civil society' to the Christian pattern which the pope has described.

In all this political activity there must be unity of aim and similarity of plan—though the pope explicitly declines the impossible task of fixing the details of a method universally applicable; this unity will be secured by Catholics loyally following the guidance of the Holy See and the bishops.

'Care must be taken never to connive, in any way, at false opinions, nor ever to withstand them less strenuously than truth allows.'

'The integrity of the Catholic faith cannot be reconciled

with opinions verging on Naturalism or Rationalism, the essence of which is utterly to sterilise Christianity, and to install in society the supremacy of man to the exclusion of God.'

'It is unlawful to follow one line of conduct in private and another in public, respecting privately the authority of the Church, but publicly rejecting it.'

In merely political matters (e.g., as to what is the best form of government), a difference of opinion is lawful. Catholics must cease to stigmatise their Catholic political opponents as bad Catholics simply because they disagree about matters such as those just mentioned. Writers, and above all, journalists, must bear this in mind.

If, therefore, there have hitherto been such dissensions let them henceforth be buried in oblivion.

### THE ENCYCLICAL QUAS PRIMAS

*It would be a very serious mistake to suppose that the pope, in such letters as Diuturnum Illud and Immortale Dei, is no more than the exponent of some model political philosophy. The pope's philosophy is, ultimately, a moral doctrine; he is distinguishing between conduct that is good and conduct that is evil, and he does this for the practical guidance of the millions of souls whose salvation is his responsibility. The problems with which he is concerned are moral problems: they can never be solved without God's grace. And least of all men are the popes likely to let this vital fact be obscured. They constantly remind their auditory of it, and they end every letter with an urgent call to prayer and good works.*

Leo XIII followed up the Immortale Dei with an encyclical, six weeks later, on the use of the Rosary, a letter which he expressly stated was supplementary to that on the politico-religious question. When, fourteen years later, the same pope consecrated the whole human race to the Sacred Heart of Jesus he again carefully related the devotion to the all-absorb-

ing matter of the needed restoration of civil society to the rule of God and His Law. To be ignorant of this aspect of the pontifical action is to risk losing sight of the aim which ultimately guides the popes: to ignore, in a work of this kind, the letters which emphasise this aspect of their social thought, would be mischievous in the extreme. Particularly we must note how, in order to preserve Catholics from any danger of thinking they can safely divorce their civic action from their religious life, and in order to teach them in a most vivid way that a merely political spirit and political methods will never suffice, Pius XI, developing the action of Leo XIII in 1899, instituted in 1925 the feast of Jesus Christ the King.<sup>1</sup> The encyclical *Quas Primas*—an analysis and summary of which follow—announces the event and explains the pope's intention. The English translation used here is that of Canon Smith, D.D., published by the Catholic Truth Society, *The Kingship of Christ* (twenty-three pages); the Latin text is entitled, *The Institution of the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ the King*.

**I. THE NEW FEAST OF CHRIST AS KING.** Pius XI announces the establishment of a new feast to honour Christ as King, in order to drive home the truth, taught in *Ubi Arcano Dei*, that there can never be real peace until men and states submit to the reign of Christ.

**II. THE FIGURATIVE KINGSHIP**—Jesus Christ is King in a figurative sense, e.g., He reigns over men's minds, over their wills, over their hearts.

**III. THE REAL KINGSHIP**—Jesus Christ is King also in the strict sense of the word: (a) Scriptural evidence supports this; the Church's liturgy also; the basis of this authority is the hypostatic union of the two natures in Jesus Christ; (b) the na-

<sup>1</sup> The opening passages of *Summi Pontificatus* (cf. *supra*, pp. 22-3) should be referred to, where Pius XII connects the actions of Leo XIII and Pius XI in this sense. The social aspect, or function, of devotion to the Sacred Heart as these three popes develop it is, surely, one of the most significant features of Catholicism in our time.

ture of this kingship and kingdom, (c) its extent, (d) the fruits, when rulers and peoples submit to this reign.

#### IV. THE FRUITS OF THIS DOCTRINE.

##### I. THE NEW FEAST OF CHRIST AS KING

THIS short encyclical of Pius XI, announcing the establishment of the new feast of Christ the King, may be considered as a kind of practical corollary to the *Diuturnum Illud*<sup>1</sup> and *Immortale Dei*<sup>2</sup> of Leo XIII. It is, at the same time, a first practical application of ideas contained in Pius XI's own *Ubi Arcano Dei*.<sup>3</sup>

In this his first encyclical, Pius XI had written that the principal cause of the difficulties now oppressing mankind was the fact that men, everywhere, 'had thrust Jesus Christ and His holy law out of their lives, and that these had no longer any place either in private affairs or in politics. . . . So long as individuals and states refused to submit to the rule of our Saviour, there could not be any real hope of lasting peace. Men must look for the peace of Christ in the reign or kingdom of Christ.'

In order to drive home this truth to the intelligence of all, Pius XI now establishes a new feast to honour Christ as King, and in the letter announcing this he takes the opportunity to explain exactly what the authority of Christ is, over states as well as over individuals.

##### II. THE FIGURATIVE KINGSHIP

It has long been the custom, the pope begins, to speak of Christ as King in a figurative way. We say, for example, that He reigns over the minds of men, not only because of the keenness of His intelligence and the extent of His own knowledge but also because He is Truth itself, and because it is from Him that mankind must drink in truth and yield obedience to it.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 76-84.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 84-102.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 15-28.

Again, we speak of Christ as ruling over men's wills, for not only was there in Him a perfect accord, due to the entire rightness and submission of the human will to the holiness of the divine will, but also because by His inspirations He so subjects our free will to His that we burn with zeal to accomplish the most noble feats. Jesus Christ is, also, we say, King over our hearts, by reason of that love which surpasses all knowledge<sup>1</sup> and of that gentle kindness which attracts and draws all mankind to Him.

### III. THE REAL KINGSHIP OF CHRIST

But the title and the authority of King belong also to Christ in all the strictest meaning of the term, to Christ that is as man. It was, for example, of Christ as man that the prophet spoke declaring that He had received from the Father 'power and glory and a kingdom.'<sup>2</sup> And in how many places in Sacred Scripture do we not read that Christ is King? The pope proceeds to quote some examples, nine from the Old Testament and eleven from the New. And the Church has followed the example of Holy Scripture, using like words in her solemn liturgical prayers, and thereby, in this matter too, verifying once more the old adage that the law about prayer establishes the rule of faith.

The basis of this kingly authority of Christ is to be found, as St. Cyril of Alexandria has noted, in His essence and His nature. It is a consequence of that marvel which we call the hypostatic union, a consequence, that is, of the way in which in Christ the truly divine and the truly human are united. It is a consequence of this union that not only is Christ to be adored as God, but also that man and angels too are subject to His authority as man.

Even more consoling, perhaps, is this other fact that Christ has authority over us not only by right of nature but also by rights acquired; acquired, that is to say, through His action as

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iiii, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Dan. vii, 13-14.

the Redeemer of us all. He bought us, indeed, 'with a great price' <sup>1</sup> and our very bodies are 'members of Christ.' <sup>2</sup> 'We are no longer our own.'

In what does this lordship of Christ over man consist? In the threefold power that goes to make up all lordship; namely (1) He can make laws which we must obey; (2) He can judge us and reward or punish us according as we have obeyed or revolted; (3) He has the power to put into execution His laws and His sentences: no man in fact can escape the sanctions He establishes.

Nevertheless, this kingdom is primarily a spiritual thing. It is by penance and faith and baptism that men enter in. The spirit it asks of them is a spirit of detachment from riches and all earthly things, a spirit of kindliness, a thirst for righteousness; it is a spirit also of self-denial and of willingness to carry the cross. This kingdom has no foes but Satan and the powers of darkness. Its King is our Redeemer; He who is, at the same time, the Priest who offered Himself and the Victim that was offered. His kingly activity is at once, in spirit, that of priest and of victim.

During His earthly life Christ, it is true, never exercised any authority in civil matters, but it would be a grave mistake to say that He does not possess such authority, for the authority over creatures given Him by the Father is absolute and altogether unlimited. His lordship is over all mankind; over Catholics, the baptised who are not Catholics, and unbelievers too. Nor is this an authority over individuals only as such. Men banded in societies, men as families for example, or as states, are likewise subject to the power of Christ. The source of salvation, for all alike, is one and the same: 'there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved.' <sup>3</sup> So it is that, if rulers wish to keep their own authority intact, and to increase the welfare of their people, they will not neglect their public duty of reverence for, and obedience to, the authority of Christ.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vi, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., vi, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Acts iv, 12.

Pius XI repeats the teaching of Leo XIII that it is public submission to the authority of Christ which invests the ruler's authority with a religious meaning and ennobles the obedience of his subjects. Such submission produces a conscientious exercise of power in the ruler and conscientious obedience in the citizen. Men will then obey, not in so far as they find their ruler perfect, but as understanding that the ruler's authority is from God, and that the ruler acknowledges this.

The truth that Christ has this kingly power over all men and over all states cannot, therefore, be too well known. In order to spread it everywhere the pope is instituting this new feast, to be kept, with the utmost ritual splendour and with explanatory sermons, every last Sunday of October. Pronouncements of the Church, even when weighty, do not immediately come to the knowledge of more than a minority of Catholics: 'feasts reach them all,' and they declare the message 'every year—in fact, for ever.'

#### IV. THE FRUITS OF THIS DOCTRINE

The pope sums up his intentions and his hopes. The new feast will be an excellent remedy against 'the plague of secularism,' that is, against the current notion that politics are something separated from morals, and that ideas of right and wrong have no place in politics; against the notion that religion has no function outside acts of worship and the affairs of a man's private life. The right of the Church to teach all mankind the true faith, to make laws for Catholics and to govern them in all that affects their salvation, will come to be more widely acknowledged. The religion of Christ will be given its due place. The attempts to treat it as no more important than the false religions, or to displace it in the interest of a natural religion consisting in a kind of instinctive affection of the heart, will cease. And all that terrible mass of ills that has come from the rebellion of individuals, and of states, against the authority of Christ will be brought to nought.

#### CHAPTER IV

THE CATHOLIC ATTITUDE TO THE MODERN STATE: I.—IN GENERAL THEORY. AN ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF THE ENCYCLICALS *LIBERTAS PRÆSTANTISSIMUM* (20 JUNE 1888) AND *SAPIENTIÆ CHRISTIANÆ* (10 JANUARY 1890), OF LEO XIII.

#### THE ENCYCLICAL *LIBERTAS PRÆSTANTISSIMUM*

*The malaise to assuage which Leo XIII composed Immortale Dei, although no Catholic country either in the Old World or in the New<sup>1</sup> had been free from it, was chiefly evident in France. And, a last evidence how deep the evil there had gone, the authoritative intervention of Immortale Dei was by no means accepted universally as the last word in the controversy. The militant pro-monarchists—bishops and priests the least silent among them—hastened to re-instruct the pope, to ‘complete’ his information, and meanwhile writers and speakers of this school were not slow to suggest interpretations of the encyclical which made its practical toleration of the new political regime a nullity. The new controversy rumbled in semi-subdued fashion for a time. Leo XIII once more took up the weary task of persuading and entreating the irreconcilables, through the agency of his nuncio at Paris, by private letters and in personal talks. Then, after two and a half years of this, he published a second encyclical, still clearer in its delimitation of Catholic truth and modern error, and clearer also, beyond*

<sup>1</sup> The student of the development of Catholic thought in this problem of Catholicism and the Modern State must not restrict his view to happenings in Europe. It is a fact of very great significance that many of the theses about this problem which Pius IX condemned (and which are to be found in the Syllabus of 1864) came from the various Latin-American countries.

all chance of even a royalist prelate's misunderstanding, in its direction that Catholics could be and must be loyal to the modern state, and play an active part in its political life. 'It is difficult to summarise or to analyse these profound pages,' Père Lecanuet, the French historian, says of this encyclical.<sup>1</sup> 'The conclusions are all so linked, one to another, that no one of them can be separated without injuring the whole.' None will agree to this more readily than those who have had to attempt to summarise it. Here, then, with this reservation, is first the analysis, and then the summary of an encyclical which, this time, is really stiff reading. The English translation used is that in *The Pope and the People*.<sup>2</sup> It is called Human Liberty.

# I. THE TRADITIONAL CATHOLIC IDEAL OF LIBERTY.

A. *Man's Liberty as an Individual:* (1) *What Liberty is;* (2) *Liberty's Relation to Law;* (3) *Natural Law and Eternal Law.*

B. *Man's Liberty as a Citizen, i.e., the relation of human liberty to human law.*

*This traditional Catholic doctrine is most advantageous to all parties; yet the 'Liberals' persistently attack it.*

# II. THE NEW, 'LIBERAL' IDEAL OF LIBERTY.

*Three types distinguished: (1) Extreme Liberalism; (2) The Liberalism that will submit to Natural Law, but to that alone; (3) The Liberalism which distinguishes between submission due in Public Life and in Private Life; and would like to separate Church and State.*

# III. FOUR MODERN 'LIBERTIES' EXAMINED.

*Liberty of Worship; of Speech and of the Press; of Teaching; of Conscience.*

# IV. PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS FOR CATHOLIC GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLE.

*(1) The Toleration of*

<sup>1</sup> *L'Eglise de France sous la III<sup>me</sup> République*, II, 351.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 70-94.

*the Liberal fait accompli is not necessarily wrong; (2) Church and State: three wrong theories; (3) Change of the form of government can be lawful, and when; (4) Democracy is a legitimate form of government; (5) To take part in political life is a duty; (6) The lawfulness of movements for National Independence.*

## I. THE TRADITIONAL CATHOLIC IDEAL OF LIBERTY

THERE are still many people—so the pope introduces his subject—who imagine that the Church is hostile to human liberty; and many also who imagine that the so-called ‘modern liberties,’ cankered though they be, are the greatest glory of the age, the very basis of civil life indeed, and that without them no perfect government can be conceived.

The first point to settle, the pope says, is what is natural liberty? For, though this is distinct and separate from moral liberty, which is really the subject of this letter, it is from natural freedom that all liberty, of whatever kind, flows. Natural liberty is a thing peculiar to beings that can reason, for it consists in the reason’s free judgement about contingent things. ‘Reason sees that whatever things are held to be good upon earth, may exist or may not, and discerning that none of them are of necessity for us, it leaves the will free to choose what it pleases.’ This is what is meant by saying that certain realities are contingent, and here is the source of all freedom, namely in man’s power to judge freely the contingent realities around him.

**MAN’S LIBERTY AS AN INDIVIDUAL.** The source of this power, to judge thus of contingency, lies in the nature of man’s soul, in the fact that the soul is a thing which is simple, spiritual and intellectual. The soul of man ‘has a life and action of its own, far surpassing the condition of things that are material—so that, knowing the unchangeable and necessary reasons of what is true and good, it sees that no particular kind of good is neces-

sary to us.' The foundation of natural liberty lies in this truth that 'man's soul is immortal, endowed with reason and not bound up with things material.' The Church has always taught that the soul is this kind of a thing. The Church has always taught that the soul is free. 'At no time, and in no place, has she held truce with fatalism.' Liberty, then, is man's faculty of choosing means adapted to the end he has in view. Nothing that man chooses is chosen except as it is judged good. Judgement is an act of the reason. And therefore the object of Liberty is that which the reason approves as good; the good, that is to say, which is in conformity with reason. To be in harmony with reason is the very essence of a free act.

Is this faculty perfect? No. Human liberty is not without defects. That is to say, we are able to choose what is good only in appearance, and is, in reality, bad. The possibility of sinning does not prove human liberty to be perfect. For the perfection of liberty consists in choosing what reason approves as good. To be able to choose wrongly, to choose the bad, though a proof of our freedom, argues a prior imperfection in what chooses, i.e., argues that the freedom is not perfect.<sup>1</sup> The mark of perfect liberty is the inability to choose wrongly.

Human liberty is then an imperfect thing. It stands in need of enlightenment—and this is first of all provided by Law, i.e., 'a rule as to what is to be done and what is to be left undone.' Law is the ordinance of reason prescribing to the will what should be sought or shunned. The necessity of Law is rooted in the fact that man's will is a free will. Law is needed to prevent disagreement between the will and reason rightly instructed. Freedom cannot mean exemption from Law. For Freedom is only perfect when choosing rightly, and in order that a choice may be right the instruction and direction of Law is needed. Again, exemption from Law would amount to exemption from Reason. Is Freedom only possible for those who have no reason? The use of Freedom, then, calls for a guide;

<sup>1</sup> The pope here quotes at length St. Thomas Aquinas commenting on John viii, 34: 'Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin.'

Law is that guide, and the sanctions of Law assist towards a right choice.

Now, what do we mean by Law? In the first place we mean the Natural Law: 'This is nothing else but our reason commanding us to do right and forbidding sin.' This Natural Law is the same thing as the Eternal Law, that is to say it is the Eternal Reason of God, the Creator and ruler of the world, 'implanted in rational creatures and inclining them *to their right action and end.*'<sup>1</sup> How is it the same thing? Well, authority is the one and only foundation of all Law, since the whole force of Law lies in the imposition of obligations and the granting of rights. But, to fix duties and define rights and assign sanctions is the function of a higher authority than the authority of those on whose behalf this is done. The prescriptions of human reason can, then, only have force of law in so far as they interpret a higher reason.

Law is given to be itself a rule for the will and a restraint. But for this strengthening and ordering of the will, God has also given man the special and most suitable aid of His divine Grace. By Grace the mind is enlightened, the will wholesomely invigorated, and the use of our inborn freedom thereby made easier and safer. Grace, it is to be noted, works *with* man's nature, i.e., in no way hindering its freedom.

MAN'S LIBERTY AS A CITIZEN: LIBERTY AND HUMAN LAW. So far the pope has been analysing what is the freedom of men considered as individuals. He passes now to consider men as they are grouped in states, to analyse in what their liberty as citizens consists. The field of man's liberty, if we think of him as one who lives bound, together with his fellows, in civil society, is traced out by Human Law.

Now with regard to Human Law we must make a distinction. The laws of states may do no more than just express the Natural Law, and in so far as they express the Natural Law, the laws of states have all the sanctions of the Natural and Eter-

<sup>1</sup> Italics in English translation.

nal Law. But there are other laws made by states, laws which do not just directly express the Natural Law, that is to say laws 'which do not follow at once and immediately, but remotely and indirectly, from the Natural Law, and decide many points which the law of nature treats only in a general and indefinite way.' This is Human Law in the real sense of the term—but, once again, it is but an extension into detail of some principle of Natural Law; 'it states a particular rule of life.'

Human Liberty, then, must always have the Eternal Law for its guide, and 'the true liberty of human society does not consist in every man doing what he pleases' but in the provision of laws such that, by obedience to them, 'man may the more easily live his life in accordance with the commands of the Eternal Law.' The whole binding force of human laws lies in this, that they are seen to have their origin in the Eternal Law and to be in faithful correspondence with it. As it is with the subject, so is it with the ruler. The liberty of rulers 'does not consist in the power to lay unreasonable and capricious commands upon their subjects' and therefore 'if, by anyone in authority, something be sanctioned out of conformity with the principles of right reason . . . such an enactment can have no binding force of Law.' So Human Liberty, by its very nature, always presupposes the necessity of obedience to some supreme and eternal law, in other words to the authority of God.

This is a singularly advantageous doctrine to all concerned. According to this doctrine, the authority which protects and perfects Human Law is divine. This is what the Church has always taught; and history bears witness to the civilising fruits of this gospel of law and liberty. Obedience so given is a nobler thing, for the authority to which it is given is really God's authority, the most just authority of all. Tyranny here meets its proper end, for to tyranny (commanding where there is no power to command, be it by laws contrary to reason, to the eternal law, or to some ordinance of God) not only is no obedience due, but it is even sinful to give it obedience. If this

Catholic doctrine be accepted, 'Authority in the State will not have all its own way, but the rights and interests of all will be safeguarded.'

## II. THE NEW, 'LIBERAL' IDEAL OF LIBERTY

This Catholic teaching about Liberty is all most reasonable—nevertheless the Church has its critics, opponents who denounce it as the great enemy to Liberty, and among these opponents are those who 'usurping the name of Liberty, style themselves Liberals.'

**EXTREME LIBERALISM.** The extreme Liberals are those who deny the existence of any divine authority, and according to whom every man is a law unto himself. If this is so, then, what gives unity to states, and what alone can give it, is the free will of the individuals who compose the State. What authority the State possesses comes from the people only, and the supreme guide of the State is the collective reason of the community. Whatever the majority decide, is right, is the source of rights, and the source of obligations.<sup>1</sup>

This is all wrong, because it removes Society (and man as a member of Society) from the action upon it of God, the first cause of it all, and the supreme law-giver. Furthermore, to make human reason the supreme judge, is to make wickedness and goodness a mere matter of opinion, the measure of a thing's lawfulness now being whether or not the thing pleases the community. Law is what the majority want: what is this but tyranny? And the ultimate strength of Law lies in physical force. But this alone is powerless to keep the covetous in check.

**THE LIBERALISM THAT WILL ONLY SUBMIT TO NATURAL LAW.** There are, of course, Liberals who see and admit that such a regime as that just described is one of mere licence. They agree that man should be ruled by Natural and Eternal Law, but

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the summary of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, *supra*, p. 86.

they hold that this should only be the Natural and Eternal Law as these are known by the natural reason.

Against this we must ask, how can we thus assign limits to God's power, choosing to notice only a part of His law? 'Man must take his standard of a loyal and religious life not only from the eternal law, but also from all and every one of those laws which God . . . has been pleased to enact. . . .'

THE LIBERALISM WHICH DISTINGUISHES between submission due in Public Life and in Private Life. Other Liberals would limit the operative sphere of the divine law to the private life of the individual: they would, for example, say that 'in public affairs the commands of God may be passed over, and may be entirely disregarded in the framing of laws.' Bound up with this, is the theory that the State ought to be separated from the Church. But this theory is an absurdity. Nature itself prescribes that the State should provide means whereby the community may live according to God's laws, because this alone is the life fully profitable to man. Again, God being the source of all law, is it not ridiculous for the State of set purpose to ignore God's own laws, and systematically to make laws that contradict these? And do rulers not owe it to their subjects to bear in mind, when legislating, their subjects' eternal welfare no less than their well-being in this life?

Finally, there are matters where the spheres of the State and of religion meet. There cannot be a real conflict between the rights of each. There needs to be some procedure by which occasions of friction are removed and the divinely established harmony preserved.

### III. FOUR MODERN 'LIBERTIES' EXAMINED

There now follows a lengthy examination of the Liberty achieved in the new age—that is to say, since 1789—according to the four principles in which it is commonly summed up,

namely Liberty of Worship; Liberty of Speech and of the Press; Liberty of Teaching; Liberty of Conscience.

**LIBERTY OF WORSHIP AS IT IS CALLED.** The principle here is that 'every man is free to profess, as he may choose, any religion or none.' This means that every man is free to exchange truth for error, goodness for evil. Whereas man is bound to adopt or choose the religion which God enjoins. Now if the State adopts this mischievous principle, it follows (*a*) that there is no reason why the State should pay God any homage, or arrange any public recognition of God; (*b*) that no one form of worship should be preferred by the State to any other, because all are on an equal footing; (*c*) that the State should take no account of the religion of the people, even if this is Catholicism.

The pope argues at some length against this view and line of policy. He ends by saying: 'Civil Society must acknowledge God as its Founder and Parent, and must obey and reverence His power and authority. Justice therefore forbids, and reason itself forbids, the State to be godless; or to adopt a line of action which would end in godlessness; namely to treat the various religions (as they call them) alike, and to bestow upon them promiscuously equal rights and privileges.'

Which religion should the State profess? Catholicism, says the pope, because that alone is true; and Leo XIII repeats the argument about the State's duty to the eternal well-being of its citizens, and refers to the *Immortale Dei*.<sup>1</sup>

Liberty of so false a kind as that just analysed is greatly hurtful. Religion is a marvellous aid to all parties in the State—to rulers and to people; and the hope with a short summary of the teaching of *Diuturnum Illud* <sup>2</sup> brings this section to an end. History shows, he says, that religious states flourish.

**LIBERTY OF SPEECH AND LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.** There obviously cannot be, for any man, an unlimited right to say what

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 90-94.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 76-84.

he likes and to print it. After all it is only truth and justice which here have absolute rights. Lying opinions and vices should be diligently repressed by the State. This is all the more necessary because the greater part of the community is at the mercy of 'illusions and deceitful subtleties and especially in all those things which flatter the passions.' If lies are not repressed truth will gradually be obscured. 'Licence will gain what liberty loses.'

But 'in regard to all matters of opinion which God leaves to man's free discussion, full liberty of thought and speech is naturally within the right of every man; for such liberty never leads men to suppress the truth, but often to discover it and make it known.'

**LIBERTY OF TEACHING.** 'Truth alone should fill the minds of men.' Therefore nothing but the truth should be taught, or allowed to be taught. In other words there are, necessarily, limits to the freedom of teaching. Now truth is of two kinds: Natural and Supernatural. Natural Truth embraces all those fundamental first principles which are the common inheritance of mankind, the foundation of all morality, justice, religion, and of the existence of society. To allow these principles to be tampered with is impious, foolish, inhuman. Supernatural Truth is to be preserved no less carefully, namely, 'that great and sacred treasure of the truths which God Himself has taught us.'

The Church is the 'greatest and most reliable teacher of mankind, and in her dwells an inviolable right to teach them.' The Church 'has never ceased to assert her liberty of teaching.' Nor has this ever been, nor could it be, any obstacle to the progress of knowledge, for 'reason itself clearly teaches that the truths of divine revelation and those of nature cannot really be opposed to one another.' There is, therefore, 'no reason why genuine liberty should grow indignant, or true science feel aggrieved, at having to bear the just and necessary restraint of laws by which, in the judgment of the Church

and of reason itself, human teaching has to be controlled.'

The work of the Church for learning throughout the centuries is described, and the pope notes how the Liberals, who claim for themselves and for the State unlimited and mischievous licence, would yet hamper the Church, and restrict her liberty of teaching within the narrowest limits.

**LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.** Here the pope makes a most important distinction. If by Liberty of Conscience is meant that each may, as he chooses, worship God or not, this obviously cannot be right. On the other hand Liberty of Conscience may be taken to mean that each 'may follow the will of God, and, from a consciousness of duty and free from every obstacle, obey His commands.' 'This,' says the pope, 'is true liberty.' This Christian liberty bears witness to God's absolute power over man. It can never be described as seditious. When the State commands what is contrary to God's Law it puts itself in conflict with divine authority; 'therefore it is right not to obey.'

But Liberals will not admit this liberty. For them it is the State which is everything, and is 'absolute and omnipotent'; man, they consider, should live altogether independently of God; that liberty which goes hand in hand with virtue and religion they will not allow, 'and whatever is done for its preservation is accounted an injury and an offence against the State.' And 'if what they say were really true, there would be no tyranny, no matter how monstrous, which we should not be bound to endure and to submit to.'

#### IV. PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS FOR CATHOLIC GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLES

Is the Catholic State, then, or are Catholic governments logically bound to begin a kind of crusade against the Liberals? and are Catholics ruthlessly to establish an order of things based on these Christian principles in place of the order in possession?

By no means, says the pope. In the first place, 'if . . . a remedy is desired, let it be sought for in a restoration of sound doc-

trine, from which alone the preservation of order and, as a consequence, the defence of true liberty can be confidently expected.' The Church, also, 'weighs the great burden of human weakness and . . . for this reason does not forbid public authority to tolerate what is at variance with truth and justice, for the sake of avoiding some greater evil, or of obtaining or preserving some greater good.' Rulers are not forbidden to imitate the Supreme Ruler of all, and we know that 'God . . . in His providence, though infinitely good and powerful, permits evil to exist in the world, partly that greater evil may not ensue.' This teaching about the lawfulness of not always interfering with evil is summed up in the words which the pope here quotes from St. Thomas Aquinas, saying that God 'neither wills evil to be done, nor wills it not to be done, but wills only to permit it to be done; and this is good.'<sup>1</sup> Therefore 'human law,' which, 'in this must endeavour to imitate God . . . may or even should tolerate evil' in these same special circumstances and 'for the sake of the common good (and this is the only legitimate reason).' But 'human law may not, and should not, approve or desire evil for its own sake.' And, it needs to be remembered, 'the more a state is driven to tolerate evil the further it is from perfection'; also, this 'always remains true—that the liberty which is claimed for all to do all things, is not, as We have often said, of itself desirable, inasmuch as it is contrary to reason that error and truth should have equal rights.'

The pope now, 'for the sake of clearness,' sums up the encyclical in its principal theses. Man, by a necessity of his nature, is wholly subject to the power of God. As a consequence any liberty, except that which consists in submission to God and in subjection to His will, is unintelligible. To deny the existence of this authority in God or to refuse to submit to it, is to act, not as a free man but as one who treasonably abuses his liberty. It is in such a disposition of mind that the chief and most deadly mischief of Liberalism consists.

<sup>1</sup> *Summa Theologica*, Pt. I, Question 19, Article 9, 3rd Solution.

The various classes of Liberals are recalled, and this gives Leo XIII a chance to speak more fully about 'that fatal principle of the separation of Church and State.' It is clear, says the pope, that these two powers, Church and State, though dissimilar in functions and unequal in degree, ought nevertheless to live in concord, by harmony in their action and the faithful discharge of their respective duties. Against this Catholic point of view three theories are active which the pope notes and condemns.

The first urges that State and Church should be 'wholly and entirely separated, so that in regard to every right of human society, in institutions, customs and laws, the offices of State and the education of youth,' the State should act as though the Church did not exist, and 'at most would allow the citizens individually to attend to their religion in private when so minded.'

The second theory allows that the Church has a right to exist, but not as a 'perfect society,' i.e., the Church should have no power to make laws, to pass judgements, to inflict penalties, 'but only to exhort and to advise and to rule the subjects in accord with their own consent and will.' For a refutation of this the pope refers to *Immortale Dei*.<sup>1</sup>

Thirdly, some agree that Church and State ought not to be separated, but 'the Church,' they say, 'ought to adapt herself to the times, and conform to what is required by the modern system of government.' There is a right sense and a wrong sense in which these words may be used. If they mean an equitable adjustment with the modern state such as is consistent with truth and justice, the words may stand. But not if their purport is an acceptance of evil practices and false doctrines. The Church can never play the traitor to God and dissemble about untruth or injustice, nor can she connive at what is hurtful to religion.

Some practical directions follow, and with these the encyclical ends.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 84-102.

(i) It has first to be said that 'it is quite unlawful to demand, defend, or grant unconditional freedom of thought, speech, writing or worship, as if these were so many rights given by Nature to man.'

(ii) 'Freedom in these things may be tolerated wherever there is a just cause; but only with such moderation as will prevent its degenerating into licence and excess.'

(iii) 'Whenever there exists, or there is reason to fear, an unjust oppression of the people, on the one hand, or a deprivation of the liberty of the Church on the other hand, it is lawful to seek for such a change of government as will bring about due liberty of action.'

(iv) 'It is not of itself wrong to prefer a democratic form of government, if only the Catholic doctrine be maintained as to the origin and exercise of power.'

(v) Special circumstances apart,<sup>1</sup> 'it is expedient [i.e., for Catholics in the modern Liberal State] to take part in the administration of public affairs.'

(vi) The Church 'does not condemn those who, if it can be done, without violation of justice, wish to make their country independent of any foreign despotic power. Nor does she blame those who wish to assign to the State the power of self-government, and to its citizens the greatest possible measure of prosperity. The Church has always most faithfully fostered civil liberty.'

### THE ENCYCLICAL SAPIENTIÆ CHRISTIANÆ

*This encyclical is dated some eighteen months later than that just summarised. It comes, indeed, midway between Libertas Præstantissimum and Rerum Novarum. More even than Libertas it is a pointed warning to Catholics that they must not wait until the world of politics is ideally organised according to Catholic principles before they take part in its life. They must*

<sup>1</sup> A reference to Italy, cf. *supra*, p. 70.

*not shrink from the combat, which is inevitable for whoever would promote Catholic principles, and they must fight in it as Catholics, that is to say in proper subordination to the directions of authority and drawing their main strength from close union with God through a life of Christian virtue. The English text followed in this work is that printed in The Pope and the People: it is entitled The Chief Duties of Christians as Citizens. Here is an analysis showing the main divisions of the encyclical.*

**I. DUTIES TOWARDS CHURCH AND COUNTRY:** *No necessary opposition between these; a Christian's obedience to the State derives from reverence and a sense of duty—it is not a reaction to force and threats; the Christian resistance to state injustice is not disobedience nor sedition; love of Church and country 'the essential duty' of a Christian.*

**II. DUTY TOWARDS KNOWLEDGE:** *One undeniable effect of the advance in knowledge about Nature is an extravagant idea of the sufficiency of Nature, e.g., God is considered as no longer necessary, nor the Church: these ideas given shape in new state codes of education; Catholics should react by studying Christian doctrine, especially in matters where religious and natural knowledge meet; and by prayer; they have a duty also to instruct others and to meet attacks.*

**III. THE METHOD AND SPIRIT OF THIS CATHOLIC ACTIVITY:** *i.e., it cannot succeed unless Catholics act as parts of a whole, in due obedience to the pope; they must obey not only in dogmatic matters, and matters of the Church's common teaching, but also whenever authoritative leadership is given.*

**IV. CHURCH AND STATE; CATHOLICS AND POLITICS:** *the Church is a society that is divinely established and divinely planned, with the divinely given right to rule Catholics; in the exercise of this right the Church is independent of the State; seven practical consequences.*

*V. SOME PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES: Prudence; Courage; Obedience to bishops; need of a solid spiritual life; the ultimate bases of Catholic life, i.e., Charity, the Home (whose rights parents must valiantly defend), Catholic Education.*

#### I. DUTIES TOWARDS CHURCH AND COUNTRY

THE key-note of this very practical encyclical is the pope's declaration that 'To refrain from doing battle for Jesus Christ amounts to fighting against Him. He Himself assures us that He will deny before His Father in Heaven those who shall have refused to confess Him on earth.' The encyclical is a plan of campaign in which Leo XIII sets out the main objectives around which this battle must be waged and declares the spirit in which Catholics must fight it.

Disorder in the public life of the world is notoriously increasing, the pope writes in the opening sentences of the letter. So, too, is men's neglect of the traditional Christian wisdom. Not all the immense material progress of the nineteenth century has really availed to satisfy the needs of the soul which was 'created for higher and more glorious benefits.' The soul cannot, in fact, be really satisfied with anything short of God, and the only way to that satisfaction is through a progressive knowledge and love of God. Man disregards this truth at his peril: he pays for his folly by an inevitable chronic anxiety of soul. So, too, is it with society as a whole; states and governments concern themselves only with material progress, they disregard God entirely, and they pay the same price: they pay the price inevitably, for, like man himself, in disregarding God they go against the very nature of things. 'Nature did not fashion society with intent that man should seek in it his last end, but that in society and through society man should find suitable aids whereby to attain to his own perfection.' A state, indeed, 'deflects woefully from its right course and from the injunctions of nature' when in the administration of public affairs it leaves God out of account, and has no care to uphold the moral

law. 'Such a gathering together and association of men should not be accounted as a commonwealth, but only as a deceitful imitation and make-believe of civil organisation.'

It is not possible for nations to remain secure for long once they allow (or cause) Christian institutions and morality to be uprooted. For these are the main foundation of human society. Once they go, force alone is left to keep public order, and force, 'being more apt to beget slavery than obedience,' only lays up further store of troubles for the ruler whose sole instrument it is.

There is only one remedy for the present state of things, namely, 'to re-establish the teachings and practice of the Christian religion (1) in the family circle, and (2) throughout the whole range of society.'

'Duties more numerous and of greater moment devolve on Catholics,' says the pope, than upon other citizens. For the Catholic is 'a subject of the Church,' being indeed 'one of the children born of her.' He ought then to have for the Church a love akin to that which he has for his country. Indeed, because it is to the Church that 'we owe the life of the soul, a life that will endure for ever,' this love for the Church is more urgent even than the love of patriotism.

But between these two great affections there need be no opposition, for they 'proceed from the same eternal principle.' The same God made the objects of both affections: God made both the Church and the State. There cannot be any collision between what each *rightly* claims from man.

But public calamities sometimes, and at other times men's ill will, have disturbed the natural relation of these two great affections. Rulers of the State sometimes ignore the Church entirely, or they try to subject the Church to their own will, or they ask from their subjects things which religion forbids. And, since 'to obey both powers is now wholly impossible,' conflict follows.

In such a conflict no one should, for an instant, hesitate as to which power he should obey. 'To withdraw allegiance from God in order to please men is a high crime. It is an act of consummate wickedness to break the laws of Jesus Christ in order to obey earthly rulers, or to disregard the rights of the Church under pretext of observing the law of the State. "We ought to obey God rather than man."'<sup>1</sup>

It is, moreover, inaccurate to describe as 'seditious' the Christian who, in such a conflict, stands loyal to God. Those who so condemn such Christians 'have not rightly apprehended the force and nature of the law.' There is not here any withdrawal of obedience where rulers have a right to claim obedience. What takes place 'is a deviation from their will in those precepts only which they have no power to enjoin.' Such precepts, says the pope, are 'anything rather than laws.'

Law, indeed, 'is, of its very essence (1) *a mandate of right reason.*' But a command that is 'in disaccord with truth and with divine reason' cannot but be in disaccord with the human reason too. Law is again (2) 'a mandate of right reason *proclaimed by a properly constituted authority.*' But no authority is properly constituted except in so far as it proceeds from God. 'It is God alone who can commit to a man power over his fellow-men.' And we cannot conceive God as sanctioning a law against things that are divine. Finally (3) 'Law is a mandate of right reason, proclaimed by a properly constituted authority, *for the common good.*' But a thing 'cannot be really good which is repugnant to the supreme and unchangeable good, i.e., God; nor can anything be good that wrests and draws away the wills of men from the love of God.'

To the Christian 'the very idea of public authority is hallowed,' for it is a kind of symbol of God's own majesty, and so the Christian does not obey law simply because he understands the meaning of force, and that threats of penalties will be carried out. He obeys as an act of reverence due in justice

<sup>1</sup> Acts v, 29.

to the authority that makes the law; his obedience comes 'from a consciousness of duty.'

Now it may be that laws made by a state 'are manifestly at variance with the Divine Law,' as, for example, when they 'enact something which is harmful to the Church,' or which conflicts with 'duties imposed by religion,' or when a law violates, 'in the person of the pope, the authority of Jesus Christ.'

In such cases 'to resist becomes a positive duty, to obey a crime.' And, be it noted, it is a crime against the State, whose true interests are injured by such laws and by obedience to them. The pope repeats that disobedience to such laws cannot be sedition. Such commands indeed 'must be looked upon as anything rather than laws.'

Both fatherlands, the spiritual and the temporal, have, then, claims upon the Christian's affection, and to love both, in the way explained, 'is the essential duty of Christians and the source whence all their other duties spring.'

## II. DUTY TOWARDS KNOWLEDGE

The new knowledge about natural forces gained in recent years, and man's new command of these forces, says Leo XIII, have proved a great source of loss to religion.

This is not because there has been anything wrong in the knowledge or in the search for it. But men have at times, because of this knowledge, conceived 'so arrogant a sense of their own powers' that they have felt able to leave God out of account altogether.

Not God, it is maintained, but Nature is the source from which we must seek truth, and the rules for our conduct. The teaching called revealed may, then, be disregarded. There is no longer any real function for the Church. Man need not obey the Church and the Church cannot possess any power to make laws that bind him. As for the State, there is no reason why it should even recognise the Church's existence.

Once the control of governments passes into the hands of men won over to this view of things, these ideas take shape in laws, and gradually, through the new laws, the morals of the people are wholly changed. And so there has come to pass what we can see to-day in very many places, that every licence is allowed to whoever will attack Catholicism, while the full exercise of Catholicism is fettered with a host of restraints.

Whenever 'such evil circumstances' arise, every Catholic's first reply will be 'to take all possible means to keep the faith intact in the depths of his own soul.' To do this means that every Catholic 'must make a real study of Christian doctrine,' and especially of those matters 'which are interwoven with religion and lie within the range of reason.' Also, since his faith needs to grow, he must earnestly pray, like the Apostles, 'Lord, increase our faith.'<sup>1</sup>

Even this is not enough. In the face of the perils of to-day 'Everyone is under an obligation to show forth his faith, whether it be to instruct and encourage his fellow-Catholics, or to repel the attacks of the unbelievers.'<sup>2</sup>

No Catholic, it is evident, can give way. Nor can any, lawfully, stand aloof. 'To recoil before the enemy, or to keep silence,' base in itself, is to insult God. And 'nothing so emboldens the wicked as the lack of courage on the part of the good.' In this battle of truth against error, Catholics 'always, by exerting themselves more strenuously, might reckon upon being successful.' 'Christians are, moreover, born for combat,' and Our Lord has told us 'Have confidence, I have overcome the world.'<sup>3</sup>

Every Catholic must then (1) 'openly and unflinchingly profess the Catholic doctrine' and (2) spread it to the utmost of his ability, for the first great need is that this doctrine shall be known. 'Faith, as a virtue, is a great gift from God's grace and goodness; nevertheless the objects themselves to which faith is

<sup>1</sup> Luke xvii, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Leo XIII is here quoting St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part 2-2, Question III, Article 2, 2nd Solution.

<sup>3</sup> John xvi, 33.

to be applied are scarcely known in any other way than by hearing.'

Preaching is then essential if men are to be saved, and though this is by divine right the business of the pope and the bishops, private individuals must take their share in 'the task of communicating to others what they have themselves received.' Leo XIII quotes the Vatican Council to support his instruction and says 'in propagating Christian truth and warding off errors, the zeal of the laity should be brought into play as far as possible.'

### III. THE METHOD AND SPIRIT OF THIS CATHOLIC ACTIVITY

Leo XIII stresses two points. Firstly, the activity must not be merely that of 'isolated champions of the faith.' The Church itself is not founded as an association of individuals, but as one single body, that lives by the life of its divine founder, Jesus Christ. If the Church is to fight, it must be as one organism, 'as an army set in battle array,' and no single member is free to 'elect that mode of fighting which best pleases him.' 'For in effect he scatters and gathers not, who gathers not with the Church and with Jesus Christ; and all who fight not jointly with Him and with the Church, are in very truth contending against God.' The needed uniformity of minds, which no force could ever produce, will come from the possession by all of the same rule of faith, which all have received from the Church, 'by whose authority and under whose guidance they are conscious that they have beyond question attained to the truth.'

Secondly, complete obedience to the Church and to the pope is absolutely essential. The justification for the demand is this. The Catholic faith rests on an authority which is not human but divine. As the Vatican Council teaches, 'We believe not on account of the intrinsic evidence of the truth perceived by the natural light of our reason, but on account of the authority of God revealing, who cannot be deceived nor Himself deceive.' Therefore, we must accept 'with a similar and equal assent' whatever God has revealed, and to decide what doctrine pre-

cisely God has revealed is the very office of the teaching Church, and the supreme teacher in the Church is the pope.

This is the reason why 'union of minds requires not only a perfect accord in the one Faith, but complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, as to God Himself. This obedience should however be perfect, because it is enjoined by faith itself, and has this in common with faith, that it cannot be given in shreds.'

'This perfection of obedience . . . has ever been . . . accounted the distinguishing badge by which we are able to recognise Catholics.' How far does the obedience extend? What is its sphere?

'It must not be supposed (1) that assent is only to be given where there is question of some dogma the obstinate denial of which cannot be disjoined from heresy'; nor again (2) is it even enough to assent at the same time, sincerely and firmly, 'to doctrines which (though not defined by any solemn pronouncement of the Church) are, by the Church, proposed for our belief, as divinely revealed, in her common and universal teaching.'<sup>1</sup> 'But this likewise must be reckoned among the duties of Christians (3) that they allow themselves to be ruled and directed by the authority and leadership of the bishops, and above all of the Apostolic See.'

#### IV. THE KIND OF THING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH' IS: WHAT ITS RELATION TO THE STATE: CATHOLICS AND POLITICS

'The Church is not just an association of Christians brought together by chance. It is a society established by God, with the direct and proximate purpose of leading the world to peace and holiness.'

Since the Church—and the Church alone—has been founded for this purpose, it is to the Church alone that God has given the means through which this purpose can be achieved.

<sup>1</sup> Doctrines, the pope recalls, which the Vatican Council declares are to be believed with Catholic and Divine Faith.

So it is that the Church 'has her fixed laws, her special spheres of action' upon human life, her own particular methods of ruling Christian people—all these as the means through which to achieve the purpose for which God founded the Church.

The Christian people whom the Church thus rules are, of course, also subject to the authority of their respective states, and this fact is the source of many difficulties.

The distinction is nevertheless clear between a man's duties as a citizen and as a Catholic, and between them there is not any necessary conflict.

The Church is a help to the State in the State's own special task of promoting the country's welfare, for the Church preaches that loyal obedience to the ruler is a part of the reverence which man owes to God.

And the Church's own task is not the country's temporal welfare but the defence of 'the Kingdom of God and His justice'; the spiritual authority, which is the means through which she accomplishes her spiritual task, is a thing in which the State can have no share at all. For 'it was not to Cæsar but to Peter that Jesus Christ entrusted the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.'

From this teaching about the relation of politics and religion it follows that,

(1) The Kingdom of Christ has a certain likeness to the civil kingdoms of this world, namely in its rights and in its powers and in the way these are exercised, that is to say, through laws and through special institutions.

(2) It is nevertheless distinguished from all states by its origin, by the principle of its life, and by its essence or nature. Therefore the Church 'possesses the right to exist and to protect herself by institutions and laws in accordance with her nature.'

(3) Since the Church does not owe its life to any human society, and is a perfect society superior to them all, it 'refuses

resolutely, prompted by right and by duty, to link itself with any mere party and to subject itself to the fleeting needs of politics.'

(4) The Church refuses to decide—since this does not fall within the sphere of its mission—'which is the best among many diverse forms of government.' All are good if they respect the rights of religion and uphold good morality.

(5) There is then ample room for legitimate differences of opinion, among Catholics, in matters of politics—provided always that the rights of justice and truth be respected as paramount.

(6) No attempt must ever be made to drag the Church into party strife, nor 'to seek to bring her support to bear against those who take opposite views.'

(7) Should it happen that the interests of Catholicism are threatened, all differences of opinion among Catholics should cease, and irrespective of party they must combine to defend religion.

Religion is the general and supreme good, to which all else should be referred—a truth which Leo XIII now proceeds to set out in greater detail. The pope repeats that Church and State are, each of them, equally sovereign in their respective spheres and that any real clash of rights between them is an impossibility. It is noteworthy that Leo XIII now says explicitly 'neither obeys the other within the limits to which each is restricted by its constitution.'

The State is founded to secure 'the tranquillity of public life.' It is one object of this tranquillity that the citizen may be able to make a living, and another that he may be able to know and practise virtue, to know and serve God, and so save his soul. States, then, should be watchful, whenever constitutions are framed or laws proposed, not thereby to hinder man in this his most important task, by laying duties on him which go contrary to it.

The Church too, on this very account, must be watchful—

'she cannot stand by indifferent' to the activity of the State, for she is the instrument by which man is to achieve his salvation.

Hence it is that, once a law goes beyond the due limits of the State's authority and trenches upon the rights of the spiritual system, the Church has the duty of resisting, a duty laid on the Church by God. The Church has also the duty to secure, as well as she can, that Christian ideals pervade the laws and institutions of the State.

The Church therefore cannot bless states which are notoriously hostile to her, which endeavour, in one way or another, to destroy her rights and to dissolve that alliance which there ought to be between her and the State.

On the other hand the Church must uphold states which are built on true principles and strive to bring them into practical effect.

Finally Leo XIII declares that Catholics themselves by their 'inertness and internal dissensions' are largely to blame for the present condition of things. Had their faith been more lively, had they kept more closely to Catholic standards of morality, such an accumulation of evils could never have come to be.

#### V. SOME PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES

There are two 'criminal excesses' to be avoided, a kind of bogus prudence and a certain spurious courage.

This bogus prudence shows itself, for example, in those who would say that 'it is not opportune boldly to attack evil-doing in its might and when in the ascendant, lest, as they say, opposition should exasperate minds already hostile.' Such Catholics, who leave one doubting on which side they really stand, fight the enemy's battle, 'leading the lives of cowards untouched by the fight.'

The second excess, of spurious courage, is seen in those who are so keen to have the Church's way of action influenced by their own ideas, that they take ill everything done in any other

way. They do not follow lawful authority but rather forestall it, and take on themselves the duties of their spiritual rulers. There is no need, says the pope, to speak in detail of the damage caused by so grave a violation of the order which God Himself has established in the Church.

No activity on the part of Catholics will be really effective, of course, 'unless our life be regulated conformably with the discipline of the Christian virtues.'

God will never desert the Church. It is not for herself that the Church dreads the wickedness of men. Her anxiety is for the nations that are now falling away from Christian virtue. Because, for such nations there is but one end; sin, as Holy Scripture tells us, reduces nations to misery.<sup>1</sup> History shows us that in every age this has proved true. So will it be with our own in its turn, and the pope says gravely: 'There are very many signs which proclaim that just punishments are already<sup>2</sup> threatening.'

It is God alone who can rescue society. Leo XIII makes a renewed appeal for prayer that men may more generally practise the virtues through which Christian life is made perfect.

The main foundation of Christian life is Charity. Divorced from Charity the other virtues either do not exist or remain barren. The pope pleads for a general renewal of the practice of this, the essential, virtue.

Especially does the pope urge this upon the heads of families. The family is 'the cradle of civil society'; it is upon the well-being of the family that the destiny of the State depends. We see to-day a strong attack made on this fundamental institution, and this attack disregards parents and their rights. For example, it is the parents really who 'hold from nature the right of training the children to whom they have given birth' and to this is superadded their duty of so training the children that they may achieve the final purpose for which God gave them existence, and gave to their parents the privilege of trans-

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xiv, 34.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., in 1890.

mitting existence to them. This purpose is, of course, union with God, a partial union in this life, a perfect union in eternity.

Parents then are bound 'to strain every nerve' to fight off these attacks on their rights. They are in the same way bound so to direct their children's training that they receive an education which is Christian, and to keep them away from schools where there is any risk to their faith.

But it must be ever remembered that it is in the home that children are most influenced. The home is more important than the school, and 'If in their early years children find within the walls of their own home the rule of an upright life and the discipline of Christian virtues, the future welfare of the State will be in great measure guaranteed.'

The pope bids the bishops make this teaching known to all their flocks and, in the last words of the letter, he repeats its main lesson, 'To refrain from doing battle for Jesus Christ amounts to fighting against Him: He Himself assures us "He will deny before His Father in heaven those who shall have refused to confess Him on earth."'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Luke ix, 26.

## CHAPTER V

# THE CATHOLIC ATTITUDE TO THE MODERN STATE: II. PRACTICAL DIRECTION FOR SPECIAL CRISES: MEXICO, ITALY, GERMANY. SUMMARY OF SIX ENCYCLICALS OF PIUS XI

## FOUR ENCYCLICALS ON MEXICO

*The encyclicals Libertas Præstantissimum and Sapientiæ Christianæ set out the duties of the Catholic in the modern state in general principles, and what practical direction these letters give is general, too. Forty years later than the last-named letter, the persecution of Catholicism in Mexico, Italy, Spain and Germany made it necessary for the pope to give Catholics more precise directions and, to a certain extent, to apply the general principles to the circumstance of these particular crises. The six encyclicals of Pius XI next to be considered contain the pope's view of what Catholic action should be in circumstances of special danger, and thereby they illustrate in concrete fashion the principles expounded in the encyclicals of Leo XIII.*

FOUR of these letters treat of Mexican affairs, and from various passages in them it is easy to study the main phases of the persecution in that country. Thus the encyclical *Iniquis Afflictisque*<sup>1</sup> singles out, as its legal origin, the provision, in the Constitution of 1917, which, separating the Church from the State, deprived the Church as such of all civil status and rights, and of all power of acquiring rights in the future. The civil authorities were now given power in ecclesiastical affairs;

<sup>1</sup> November 18, 1926. There is not an available English translation: the Latin text bears the sub-title, *The Bitter Fate of Catholicism in Mexico*.

the clergy, reduced in law to the status of ordinary citizens, were subjected to these three restrictions: (1) they must be Mexicans by birth; (2) they must not exceed a certain number (fixed by the administration) in the various states, and (3) they were henceforth to enjoy no civil rights; to lose these, in fact, as though they were criminals or insane. They were, furthermore, to notify to the local civil authority any changes of appointment; and henceforth vows of religion were forbidden and religious orders abolished. There were to be no acts of worship outside the walls of the churches, and even these were placed under government supervision. The churches themselves, clergy houses, seminaries, monasteries, hospitals and buildings belonging to the charitable institutions were declared state property. The Church could no longer lawfully own anything. As to schools, no priest or religious or nun could open or manage an elementary school, and in no children's school—even private schools—was it lawful to give any religious instruction.

A further decree of 2 July 1926 took away the last remnant of clerical freedom, and the unauthorised exercise of the sacred ministry was punished now as a capital crime. Priests and religious were banished or imprisoned, and the most extraordinary conditions were laid down for the exercise of their ministry, e.g., that they should marry, that they should only baptise with running water. Soon the prisons began to be filled with priests, religious, nuns and faithful Catholics, and soon the blood of these began to flow plentifully, while a government-directed propaganda of calumny and filth strove to set public opinion against the innocent victims of the persecution.

The Mexican bishops protested energetically, but without any effect, and, of course, they explained to their people that laws such as these were not laws at all and must not be obeyed. Then, as a final measure, they suspended all public exercise of religion. The Government replied by seizing the churches, and when the bishops appealed to the Mexican parliament they were refused even a hearing since, being clerics, they had no

existence in law. It is one of the glories of Mexican Catholicism that, of its 4,000 or so priests, the Government found no more than three who yielded and consented to become its instruments in the foundation of a new, well-endowed, national church.

Six years later, in the letter *Acerba Animi*, 29 September 1932,<sup>1</sup> Pius XI reviews the efforts of the Holy See to remedy this terrible situation. He relates how he had encouraged the Mexican Catholics to resist the persecution by all means that were lawful, to seek to placate God's justice by prayer and by penance; how he had urged the whole Catholic Church to unite in prayer for this persecuted land, and how he had done all he could through diplomatic channels.

The Government of Mexico had, next, shown signs that it would not be sorry to see the crisis at an end. And the pope, though by no means confident (after his earlier experiences) of the Government's good faith, began to consider whether it would not now be well to revoke the suspension of public worship. The main consideration that influenced him was the quasi-certainty that the suspension was seriously injuring Catholic religious life; and the prolonged absence of the bishops was bringing about a breakdown of ecclesiastical discipline.

A declaration of the Mexican Government in 1929 gave the pope his opportunity. This declaration explicitly set forth that the Government had had no intention of destroying the 'identity of the Church' nor of ignoring its hierarchy. And the pope—not of course with any idea of accepting the Government's claim to regulate the number of priests—of his own motion, ordered the resumption of public worship.

But this gesture of peace on the pope's part was without fruit. The persecution continued, and still more bishops were exiled. Religious teaching was now forbidden in the schools, and teachers were encouraged to indoctrinate their pupils with theories positively anti-religious and immoral. As to the

<sup>1</sup> English translation in *Selected Encyclicals* (Catholic Truth Society), Vol. II, fifteen pages. The title is *The Wrongs Done to the Church in Mexico*.

State regulation of the number of priests, in Michoacan one priest was allowed for every 33,000 Catholics; in Chiapas one for every 60,000; in Vera Cruz, one for every 100,000. Seminaries were closed and church revenues confiscated.

Perhaps the clearest evidence of this sinister design to destroy Catholicism in Mexico was the State's explicit declaration that, in granting licences to priests to officiate it did not give any recognition to the authority of the bishops.

The present book's interest in these four particular encyclicals is simply the instance they provide of practical papal direction for a particular problem of public conduct—namely how Catholics should react to a particular persecution—direction based on the Catholic principles set out already in preceding encyclicals.

THE LETTER, 'PATERNA SANE SOLLICITUDO,' of 2 February 1926<sup>1</sup>—the first of these four on Mexico—definitely states that these persecuting 'laws' are not laws at all—'You know very well,' the pope says to the bishops, 'that they are so far from being based on right reason and directed to the common good, that they do not even deserve the name of laws.' Hence it was that the pope's own predecessor—Pope Benedict XV—had congratulated the Mexican bishops when, so justly and religiously, they made their public protest and refused all recognition to these laws.

Why, then, has Pius XI allowed the four years since his accession to go by without any public condemnation of the Mexican Government? Certainly, says the pope, the conduct of the Government merited such a condemnation, and called for it. But the pope has been possessed, until now, by a lingering hope that sooner or later the Mexican Government would return to a better way of thinking. This is why he has borne so

<sup>1</sup> There is no readily available English text of this letter. Its Latin text bears the title *The Evil Condition of the Church in Mexico: Directions for Catholic Action There*.

patiently with the tyranny, and why he begged the Mexican bishops to show a like patience.

But the pope has now come to the conclusion that, humanly speaking, no change of heart is to be looked for in the Government of Mexico. All his advice and warnings now centre round one sole point. 'With all a father's concern we urge you to extend daily more and more what is called "Catholic Action," to spread it among the Catholics committed to you in a spirit of mutual assistance and strict discipline.'

'*Catholic action*,' the pope insists—because in such a crisis as that in which the Mexican Church finds itself, it is more than ever necessary that the Church shall not act *politically*. 'It is beyond all else important that you, the bishops, your clergy, the Catholic societies and associations, keep utterly aloof from any interest in party politics, so as not to give the enemy any pretext to treat religion as a political party or faction. Therefore, let the Mexican Catholics be careful not to group themselves as such, in a political party that calls itself Catholic; let the bishops above all and their priests continue in their present praiseworthy conduct, that is to say give no allegiance to any particular party, and give no aid by writing for any of the party magazines; for their ministry embraces the whole body of the faithful, nay all the citizens of the State.'

'These directions,' the pope goes on to say, 'will not hinder Catholics from making every use of what rights and functions they possess in common with other citizens. Nay more, Catholics must make the very best use of such rights and offices for the good of the faith, and the inseparable welfare of religion and country.' Nor is it lawful for the clergy to abandon all interest in the affairs of their country. Far from following such a line of conduct, they must as priests, while they keep carefully aloof from the strife of political parties, do their utmost in the service of their country, by exercising their civil rights and fulfilling their duties as citizens with the utmost conscientiousness, and also by taking care that the Catholics do likewise

after the pattern set for them in the laws of God and the Church. There is an immense field of action open to the clergy—without any need to enter into party politics—in social and economic matters, in the sphere of morals and intellectual culture, where they can develop a Catholic outlook in the minds of young people especially, and of the workers. It is here that, God aiding, the solution will be found for the bitter anxieties that have, for so long, tormented the people of Mexico.

THE LETTER 'INQUIS AFFLICTISQUE,'<sup>1</sup> the second in the series, written nine months later, was addressed to the whole Catholic world,<sup>2</sup> to expose the tyranny of the persecuting Government, and to praise the heroic patience and courage of the Mexican Catholics everywhere.

THE THIRD LETTER 'ACERBA ANIMI'<sup>3</sup> is written six years later very nearly, 29 September 1932. It is addressed to the bishops of Mexico and, like the first letter, it is concerned to give practical direction. The persecution has recently, in 1932, increased in violence. What does the pope now consider that the faithful Mexican Catholics shall do?

Pius XI first explicitly declares that he has studied every aspect of the matter and listened to all sections of Catholic opinion, and very notably to the section that calls for a return to the severer line of conduct and the suspension of public worship. The pope notes that as the new legislation is not applied with uniform severity in all the states of Mexico, the Catholics cannot adopt a uniform plan of action, but must act differently according to the different local conditions.

Here the pope finds it necessary to utter a kindly-worded admonition to some of the faithful, whose zeal is not always according to prudence, that they are not to jump to the conclusion that the Mexican hierarchy is no longer united because, in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. note, p. 135, *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> The first letter, just summarised, was addressed to the bishops of Mexico only.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. note, p. 137, *supra*.

different circumstances, different bishops act in different ways. The bishops, the clergy, and the laity are to continue to protest with all their energy, by every legitimate means. Such protestation is never sterile. It may not immediately move the State; but it never ceases to educate public opinion in this important particular, namely that the State is attacking the freedom of the Church and that, whatever the persecution, the Church can never consent to surrender her freedom.

As to the protests made so far, the pope heartily congratulates all concerned, and joins to theirs his own protest, now renewed, before all the nations of the world. Let rulers everywhere take notice, this persecution in Mexico, an outrage against God, is also a menace to the very existence of social order. To subvert the social order is the aim of these organisations that profess atheism.

Meanwhile Catholics in Mexico are to make all possible use of all spiritual means, and of public worship. Wicked laws demand that the State's permission be obtained for acts of public worship. There are, apparently, Catholics who think it wrong to go to Mass said, as it were, by leave of the State, and who say that such leave should never be asked; that to ask it is, in fact, sinful. The pope solves this case of conscience, declaring the scruple to be 'a vain and unfounded fear.' To approve these laws would be wrong, and it would be wrong 'spontaneously to give them true and proper co-operation. But absolutely different is the case of one who yields to such unjust regulations solely against his will and under protest.' The act of the priest who, in order to exercise his ministry for the good of souls, asks the State's permission 'is not a very different act from that of one who, robbed of his belongings, is obliged to ask his unjust despoiler for at least the use of them.'

Given the repeated protests of the Holy See in this matter, the danger of the co-operation called *formal* is removed. The co-operation of the priest who asks the State's permission according to law is only *material*, and the pope draws a parallel between this and the conduct of those who, in the early Church,

bribed their way into the prisons to give the sacraments to the confessors. Would anyone conclude from this that they in any way approved or justified the actions of the persecutors?

Finally the pope urges all to still greater efforts and to a still deeper surrender of self for the sake of the cause. Above all he pleads for an intensifying of Catholic Action, and for docility to the guidance of the bishops.

THE FOURTH LETTER, 'NOS ES MUY,'<sup>1</sup> again addressed to the bishops of Mexico, is dated Easter Sunday (28 March 1937). In the four and a half years since the *Acerba Animi* things have greatly changed for the worse, so the letter states, and the patience of the Catholics with the tyrannous minority which, through its possession of the machinery of government, oppresses them, is wearing thin. Once again Pius XI intervenes with some special practical direction based on Catholic moral principles.

The pope begins by praising, yet once again, the amazing heroism with which the vast majority of the Catholics of Mexico have continued to profess the Faith and to practise their religion. This far outweighs the defection of those lukewarm and timid souls who, 'although they adore God in the depths of their consciences,' have, externally, surrendered to the persecution.

The first principle to be borne in mind by this faithful majority is that a restoration of Christianity depends on two things: (1) the holiness of the clergy, and (2) 'the formation of a laity fit for fruitful co-operation in the apostolic work of the hierarchy.'

As to the priests, Pius XI takes occasion now to commend the bishops for what they have accomplished, to praise the work of the Latin American College in Rome, and the generous hospitality of the United States' bishops to Mexican semi-

<sup>1</sup> The Latin version of this encyclical is known as *Firmissimam Constantiam*: the English translation used here is that printed in *Selected Encyclicals* (Catholic Truth Society), Vol. II, nineteen pages: it is called *The State of the Church in Mexico*.

narists and, for a detailed exposition of the ideals of modern priestly life, he refers to his own encyclical letter on this subject, *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii*.<sup>1</sup>

The priests are, in turn, 'assiduously to train' their people to be Christians, sound in doctrine and strong in piety. The pope is aware that 'not everybody yet realises to the full the need for this holy apostolate of the laity' despite his fifteen years' urging it. So he continues to urge it upon the Mexican Church, and insists that the lay activity which he desiderates is not an activity which is the fruit of 'a purely natural tendency to action, but of a solid inner formation, the necessary expansion of an intense love for Jesus Christ and for the souls redeemed by His precious Blood, a love that leads one to imitate His life of prayer, self-denial and zeal.' The task is immense, truly, and therefore the quality of the workers is of greater importance than mere numbers. Our Lord did not call great numbers into the Apostolic College, but 'a few chosen men.' The bishops are not to worry if their lay collaborators are 'at the beginning no more than "a little flock."' But these lay collaborators need to be a body that is trained.

A healthy Catholic Action upon the life of Mexico, such is the pope's remedy for the disease of anti-God. Of such action a real spiritual formation and a strong inner life in all the collaborators are essential conditions. They must not for a moment forget that the ultimate aim is the sanctification of souls: all other activities, social, economic, charitable, must be subordinated to this. Catholic Action will prepare the men fitted to engage in such activities, and teach them the principles that are to guide their action. What Catholic Action must never do, is to 'take over responsibility for the purely technical, financial or economic sides of this work.' These 'lie outside its jurisdiction and aim.' As instances of problems which Catholics might attempt to solve, Pius XI cites 'the agrarian problem, the reduction of the large estates, the betterment of the conditions of living and of the workers and their families.'

<sup>1</sup> Catholic Truth Society, *Selected Encyclicals*, Vol. II.

The right of ownership is a right that is primary and fundamental, but 'the common good sometimes requires that such rights be limited and that recourse be had more frequently than in times past to the dictates of social justice.' At times the bishops will be bound to make a 'frank denunciation of unjust and unworthy conditions of living.' But they are to take care not to approve violence masked by the pretext of remedying the sufferings of the masses; nor must they encourage sudden and turbulent changes in the age-old structure of society, which disregard equity and moderation, and do more harm even than the evils that call for remedy.

Nevertheless, the bishops are to have 'an active concern for social problems' and 'truly love the worker—for his state of life approximates more closely than any other to that of Our Divine Master.' Particularly does the pope urge upon the bishops their duty of helping, materially as well as spiritually, the agricultural labourers and the native Indian peoples, 'millions of human beings who often live in such sad and wretched conditions that they do not enjoy even that minimum of material well-being indispensable for human self-respect.' Let 'the whole of Mexican Catholic Action engage in this work of moral and material redemption.'

Mexican emigrants also need every care, especially those who go to live in non-Catholic countries, and the pope has a particular command regarding students. Students are to be trained in the practice of their religion, of course, but to this the bishops must add 'a special and careful intellectual training based on Christian philosophy, the philosophy that is so rightly called *philosophia perennis*.' A formation of this kind is more than ever needed in such a time as ours, a time which is marked by a tendency 'towards all that is superficial . . . an ever increasing aversion from thought and concentration, a propensity in the spiritual life itself to guidance by feelings rather than by reason.'

The pope speaks of the care needed to secure a Catholic education for the children, and notes that in the works of

Catholic Action adolescents will find the best protection for their faith and their purity.

In Mexico, above all places, Catholic Action cannot but be of primary importance. It must always come first and even the business of defending the liberty needed for religious and civil life cannot take precedence of it. It is, in fact, 'in the eternal and immutable principle of the Gospels and in the sincere practice of Christian morality' that the salvation of Mexico really lies.

Now that he has stated this important principle, and made it clear beyond doubt that the education of consciences and the formation of moral qualities is a business to which all else—even the most urgent seeming of Catholic activities, even during the persecution—must be subordinated, the pope proceeds to discuss the great question agitating the active Mexican Catholics, namely to what lengths is it allowed them to go in defending their most elementary religious and civil rights?

True enough, it is in the principles of the Gospels and the sincere practice of Christian morality that the very heart of the Christian life is found, but if Christian life is to develop, it needs external, concrete supports. The Church is a society of actual men, and it cannot exist or grow if it does not enjoy freedom of action. The men and women who make up the Church have the right to find within the State a possibility of living in accord with their consciences. If this right, the most elementary of religious and civil liberties, is attacked, what is the Catholic to do? 'It is only natural that . . . Catholic citizens should not passively resign themselves to forgo it.' As to the form which the activity of such oppressed Catholics will take, and the vigour of their action, this 'will vary according to circumstances.'

Whereupon the pope, recalling how the Mexican bishops have already counselled their people, proceeds to re-state, in a passage every word of which must be carefully weighed, the classic teaching of the Church as to the lawfulness of armed resistance to the acts of the civil authority.

'You have more than once reminded your flock that the Church promotes peace and order even at the cost of great sacrifices to herself, and that she condemns every unjust rebellion or act of violence against the properly constituted civil power. On the other hand, you have also affirmed that if the case arose where the civil power should so trample on justice and truth as to destroy even the very foundations of authority, there would appear no reason to condemn citizens for uniting to defend the nation and themselves by lawful and appropriate means against those who make use of the power of the State to drag the nation to ruin.

Although it is true that the practical solution depends on concrete circumstances, it is nevertheless Our duty to remind you of some general principles which must always be kept in mind, namely:

1. That the methods used for vindicating these rights are means to an end, or constitute a relative end, not a final and absolute end;

2. That, as means to an end, they must be lawful and not intrinsically evil acts;

3. That since they should be means proportionate to the end, they must be used only in so far as they serve to attain that end, in whole or in part, and in such a way that they do not bring greater harm to the community than the harm they were intended to remedy;

4. That the use of such means and the exercise of civic and political rights in all their fullness, involving matters of purely temporal and technical kind or of recourse to force in self-defence, do not fall directly within the province of Catholic Action as such; although, on the other hand, it is part of the function of Catholic Action to prepare Catholics for the proper use of their rights and for the defence of those rights by all just means, as required by the common good;

5. Since the clergy and Catholic Action are, by reason of their mission of peace and love, consecrated to the purpose of uniting all men "in the bond of peace," they ought to contrib-

ute greatly to the prosperity of the Nation, by promoting the union of citizens and of social classes, and by collaborating in all those social measures that are not contrary to Christian doctrine and morality.'

The pope then repeats what he has already so strenuously urged upon the attention of these Mexican stalwarts, namely that the results of their civic action will be effective in proportion as Catholics 'more intensely possess that supernatural view of life, that religious and moral formation; that burning zeal for the spreading of Christ's kingdom,' which is Catholic Action's gift to those dedicated to it. Here, in fact, is the perfect Christian citizen 'whose gifts and actions are all ennobled and made sublime by the supernatural life.' Such Catholic citizens will be careful never to neglect to use their right to vote whenever the good of Church or fatherland is at stake; they will never organise themselves into Catholic political parties, striving against each other, or in opposition to ecclesiastical authority, thus adding to confusion and dissipating Catholic energy.

There are innumerable non-political purposes to attain which Catholics can unite in leagues: associations of fathers of families, for example, to defend the freedom of education, the rights of the family, the holiness of marriage, public morals. 'Catholic Action does not rigidly crystallise into fixed schemes, but co-ordinates . . . other activities and auxiliary institutions' while keeping its own autonomy. The principles are universal; the pattern is common; but the variety of local needs calls for difference in methods of organisation; and practical solutions for the same problem may differ, while yet being equally right in that each is suited to its own local requirements.

It is for the bishops to have the last word in these controversies, and the pope ends this letter with an appeal to the Mexicans to obey their bishops loyally, and for 'unity, charity and peace in the apostolic work of Catholic Action which has been called to restore Christ to Mexico,' and bring about a return of national well-being.

THE ENCYCLICAL ON ITALY<sup>1</sup>

*From the very first days of the successful Fascist movement in Italy, the pope, Pius XI, had been keenly alive to the totalitarian tendencies latent in it. Repeatedly in public addresses to the cardinals he spoke of certain human rights which no earthly power could infringe, and uttered warnings about making the State the object of a kind of worship. Even when, in 1929, Pius XI accomplished the most spectacular pontifical act of modern times—the treaty in which he acknowledged the fact of United Italy, and Italy recognised the pope's sovereign status; the Concordat with Italy in which Italy recognised the Church's right freely to manage its own affairs—even then, the pope's misgivings did not wholly cease, as several of his utterances about this time remain to show. Noteworthy among these are the pope's commentary on Mussolini's speech explaining to the Italian parliament what the treaty and concordat had accomplished. In 1931, however, the actively anti-Catholic section of the Fascist party broke loose. What its aim and what it actually accomplished are to be read in the singularly vigorous protest made to the world in the encyclical *Non Abbiamo Bisogno* now to be summarised; which encyclical—and this is the reason for summarising it here—contains a practical application of Catholic principles suited for a particular crisis, and made by the pope himself. In this letter the pope (I) describes the persecution and insists that it has been this and nothing less than this; (II) analyses what has been the Fascists' real aim; and (III) gives some practical instructions to the Catholics who find themselves in inevitable conflict with certain demands of the Fascist state. The tone and language of this encyclical are of a quite unusual warmth and vigour.*

<sup>1</sup> The Italian text is called *Non Abbiamo Bisogno* (29 June 1931): the English translation, *Selected Encyclicals* (Catholic Truth Society), Vol. I, forty-two pages, is entitled, *On Catholic Action*, as is the original text.

## I. THE FASCIST PERSECUTION

THE events which provoked the encyclical *Non Abbiamo Bisogno* took place, says the pope, in 'this our episcopal city of Rome and throughout Italy, that is to say, in the very territory of which we are primate.'

There had been, for a long time, a 'campaign of false and unjust accusations' in preparation for 'the disbanding of the associations of young people and university students affiliated to Catholic Action.' And against this campaign the pope had several times protested.

Nevertheless this propaganda was allowed, and the suppression ultimately took place with 'acts of brutality and violence, blows and shedding of blood.' And the suppression was an official business, very evidently done at the command of Mussolini himself. It even reached to the little children's sodalities, and the religious associations of girls called 'the Children of Mary.'

It was, says the pope, 'a real and a true persecution,' accompanied by 'attacks on truth and justice on a very large scale.' 'In no state of the world has Catholic Action been so hatefully treated, so truly persecuted . . . as in this our Italy.' The Government controls the Fascist press, says the pope, and the lies it allowed to be circulated through that press were summarised in a broadcast 'hypocritically described as unofficial.' Pius XI states that he would be unworthy of his position if he did not denounce this unexampled instance of impudent lying.

The pope refutes, point by point, the assertions of that broadcast and recalls incidentally the chief features of this new attack on Catholicism, its impious and blasphemous irreverence, its violence and its vandalism. He begins to wonder if the seeming benevolence of the diplomatic recognitions in 1929 was not a scheme to trap the Church into such a position that the State could hold it at its mercy.

The police carried out their orders with the very extreme of violence and irreverence, and high authority looked on and connived at all that was done. The pope, as a protest, and for the obvious reason of the safety of all concerned, suspended therefore the Corpus Christi processions. In some places the civil authority put pressure on the clergy to force them to disobey the pope's instructions, and in other places there were 'impious parodies of the sacred procession, all of which were permitted to take place to the profound sorrow of the faithful and to the great amazement' of all who saw the very guardians of peace and order helping the destruction of both.

The root of the trouble, according to the Fascist chiefs, is that Catholic Action is a political association, that it is, in fact, the old Catholic political party, revived and disguised as a religious society. The pope has no difficulty in disproving this really silly statement, and he notes how the famous broadcast of which he complains, and which is really the official statement of the case against the Church, 'itself betrays a consciousness of its own weakness and futility.' Far from Catholic Action supplying a cover for the political enemies of Fascism, it is Fascism that has given new life and new opportunities to all the anti-religious elements of Italian life, allowing these into the party where 'they have been made even more strong and dangerous than before, inasmuch as they are now dissembled, and also protected, by their new uniform.'

The real reason for the attack on these Catholic associations of young people lies elsewhere. What was desired, and attempted, was in fact nothing else than to tear away from the care of the Church all the young people of Italy. And with this statement of the pope, we may pass to the second aspect of this great and thunderous letter, its practical direction for the conduct of Fascism's Catholic victims.

## II. THE FASCIST OBJECTIVE

What else, in fact, has been attacked in this affair but 'the sacred and inviolable rights of souls and of the Church . . .

the right of souls to procure for themselves the greatest spiritual good according to the teaching, and under the formative work, of the Church, the divinely appointed and sole mandatory of this teaching and of this work, in that supernatural order which is established in the blood of the Redeemer and which is necessary and of obligation for all of us if we are to share in the Divine Redemption.'

There is, in fact, no possible doubt of the Italian State's determination to monopolise completely the young, from their tenderest years up to manhood and womanhood, for the exclusive advantage of a party and of a régime which are based on a system of thought that clearly amounts to nothing else than a true, real, pagan worship of the State.

The pope contrasts with this Our Lord's words, 'Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto Me,' and 'Woe to that man who shall scandalise one of these little ones.' He declares this Fascist aim to be in conflict with the natural rights of the family as with the supernatural rights of the Church. 'To propose and to promote such a monopoly . . . is truly and literally to "forbid the little children to go to Jesus Christ."' The State has its own rights in the matter of the education of children, and its own role,<sup>1</sup> but what the Fascists are attempting is usurpation.

It is in fact to the Catholic Church that God has committed on earth the care of all that scheme of things we call the supernatural, 'which is of obligation for every rational creature, and which must—by the very nature of things—subordinate, co-ordinate to itself all else.' Catholic Action is nothing more than the Catholic Church putting into execution its mission to foster the growth of the supernatural life in the souls into which, by baptism, the Church put the first indispensable beginnings of that life. Catholic Action goes back to Jesus Christ Himself; it begins with Him choosing and educating the Apostles to be His fellow-workers.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Encyclical on Christian Education, *infra*, pp. 197-199.

## III. THE PAPAL DIRECTION

What kind of a Catholic, then, is the man who will now stand up and teach the Church what suffices, and what must suffice, for a truly Christian education? Certainly the Fascist version of this has shown itself to produce merely 'a sham of religion . . . a species of religion which rebels against the directions of higher religious authority . . . a feeling that can go so far as to cry "Down with the pope, Death to the pope," an apprenticeship to parricide.' This sham religion cannot be reconciled with Catholic doctrine. More positively still, the pope goes on to declare that 'A conception of the State which makes the rising generation belong to it entirely, without any exception, from the tenderest years up to adult life, cannot be reconciled by a Catholic either with Catholic doctrine or with the natural rights of the family. It is not possible for a Catholic to accept the claim that the Church and the Pope must limit themselves to the external practice of religion (such as Mass and the Sacraments) and that all the rest of education belongs to the State.'

The pope has, so far, refrained from any explicit condemnation of these 'false and erroneous doctrines and maxims,' hoping, partly, that the evil was but an exaggeration that troubled only the surface of a great movement. In this the pope has had many critics. He has been more optimistic than they, as to the possibilities of co-operation. But these latest events have destroyed his 'fondly held supposition.' 'Therefore We must say, and do hereby say, that he is a Catholic only in name and by baptism . . . who adopts and develops a programme with doctrines and maxims so opposed to the rights of the Church of Jesus Christ and of souls. . . .'

Fascists—even the children—are bound to take an oath that they will, without discussion, execute the orders of the chief of the State. Thereby 'they swear to serve with all their strength, even with their life, the cause of a revolution, which is snatching the young from the Church and from Jesus Christ, and

which inculcates in its own young people hatred, violence and irreverence.' Can Catholics lawfully take such an oath? 'There is inevitably only one answer, and We, Venerable Brethren, do not wish to do otherwise than confirm the answer already given. Such an oath, as it stands, is unlawful.'

The pope is haunted by the fact that 'so many of our children, young boys and young girls, are inscribed and have taken membership with that oath.' He is haunted by the thought of the torture of conscience that has gone with the taking of the oath. To refuse the oath is, in many cases, to be condemned to lose all chance of a career, of a living even, and at times to lose one's very life. The pope offers a practical means for the relief of these anguished souls. 'It seems to Us that such a means for those who have already received the membership card would be to make for themselves, before God, in their own consciences, a reservation such as "Saving the laws of God and the Church" or "In accordance with the duties of a good Christian."' With the firm resolve to declare also externally such a reservation if the need of it arose.<sup>1</sup> The best solution of all would be for the oath to be dropped. An oath is an act of religion and is out of place on the membership cards of a political party.

Note well, the pope says in effect, that it is not the Fascist party as such that is condemned, but only 'those things in the programme and in the activities of the party which have been found to be contrary to Catholic doctrine and Catholic practice, and therefore irreconcilable with the Catholic name and profession.' To point out such incompatibilities is, really, a service to the party, for 'What interest and success can the party gain, in a Catholic country like Italy, through retaining in its programme ideas, maxims and practices which cannot be reconciled with a Catholic conscience?'

The pope ends the encyclical with a plea for prayer, and yet

<sup>1</sup> From the moment this encyclical was published the Fascist chiefs would know that Catholics were making this reservation, and therefore those who made it would not be in the position of men who swear one thing and secretly mean something else known only to themselves.

further prayer, to God, for while the future is still dark, 'everything is possible to God and it is God who has promised everything in answer to prayer.'

## THE ENCYCLICAL ON GERMANY<sup>1</sup>

*This encyclical—Mit Brennender Sorge is its title—was the culminating act of a series of protests made by Pius XI, through four years, against the Nazi Government's persecution of the Church in Germany. The letter consists of (I) an examination of the spirit and aims of that persecution; (II) a warning to German Catholics against three special dangers to faith which the Nazi methods have produced; (III) a reminder that the Catholic faith (belief in God, belief in Christ, belief in the Church and in the Roman Primacy) is an indissoluble unity; (IV) four special directional messages, to the young people, to priests and religious, to parents, to the laity generally. In conclusion the pope warns the Nazis of the doom that awaits all who set themselves to thwart Almighty God.*

### I. THE PERSECUTION A FACT

THE pope begins by speaking of his deep anxiety and increasing dismay at the sufferings of the Church. The reports he has received leave no room for doubt: from the beginning, the Nazi Government has had no other aim than to exterminate Catholicism in Germany. A thousand forms of organised bondage enmesh the German Catholics. The leaders of the Nazi

<sup>1</sup> The text of this encyclical is German: the English translation used here is that published by the Catholic Truth Society (*Selected Encyclicals*, Vol. II, thirty-two pages) and called *The Persecution of the Church in Germany*. It bears the date 14 March 1937—Passion Sunday; just five days later the letter *Divini Redemptoris* was published condemning Atheistic Communism (cf. *supra*, pp. 58–75), and a fortnight later, on Easter Sunday, the letter *Nos Es Muy*, about Mexico, appeared (cf. *supra*, pp. 142–147).

party have let it be understood that to leave the Church, to be disloyal to Christ the King, is a particularly convincing and meritorious way of showing one's loyalty to the new regime. And by coercion, open or masked, by threats, by offers of professional advantages, the loyalty of Catholics to their faith is strained in a way that is unworthy of human beings. Day by day the press, and the radio, are at the service of a sham Christianity, and overwhelm the Catholic with attacks on his belief and on his Church. The result of this propaganda of calumny is that the Catholic lives in an atmosphere of bitterness, suspicion, contempt. He is reputed as disloyal and his professional and social life suffers heavy loss. The Catholic schools, by a tyrannical interference with the freedom of elections, and in violation of the Concordat between the Nazi Government and the pope, have been all but abolished. The clergy have been hindered and hampered at every turn in the exercise of their ministry and the religious orders have been very largely disbanded.

The encyclical does not, however, set out to tell the story of the persecution. Its purpose is, firstly, to make a protest, before all the world, against the treachery and bad faith that have, throughout, characterised the Nazi Government's dealings with the Holy See, and then, secondly, to give some explicit direction to the Catholics of Germany, now exposed to the subtle malignity of their rulers.

The pope first explains how he came to sign the Concordat with Germany in 1933. The offer was made by the Nazi Government, and Pius XI, 'in spite of many serious misgivings at the time, forced' himself to consent. He was anxious not to lose even the least opportunity of safeguarding the Church's existing rights in Germany, and especially its guaranteed freedom of ministry to souls. He was no less anxious to spare the Catholics of Germany any anxiety and suffering that would have come to them had the pope refused to treat with the new Nazi Government. Finally he felt bound to show that to no

one offering peace will the Church ever refuse co-operation. He could not allow it ever to be said that there would be religious peace in Germany had it not been for the pope's fault in refusing the State's proffered friendship.

However, the pope has found, in these four years, that the Nazi Government has made it a matter of principle, 'to change the meaning of the agreement, to evade the agreement, to empty the agreement of all its significance, and finally more or less openly to violate the agreement.' All that time, 'in the furrows where We were labouring to sow the seeds of sincere peace, others were sowing the tares of distrust, hatred, calumny, secret and open enmity . . . enmity fed from a thousand springs and working with every means at its disposal.'

The pope has privately protested; he has implored and entreated and warned the German Government. He has done all he can 'to defend the sanctity of a word solemnly pledged, to protest the inviolability of obligations freely undertaken.' But working against the pope were other 'theories and practices which, if officially approved, must destroy all confidence and render useless any word that might also be pledged in the future.'

Why then has the pope put up for so long with this systematic tergiversation? It was by no means mere expediency, nor through any unworthy weakness, but the pope feared to root up good wheat with the tares; he did not wish to pronounce judgement before men's minds were made ready for the inevitability of the judgement and, also, he was resolved not to deny definitively the good faith of his opponents until 'the hard language of facts' had torn away 'the systematic camouflage with which the German Government disguised its persecution of the Church.'

Even now, when he is thus exposing the lies and hypocrisy of the Nazi tyranny in religious matters, the purpose of Pius XI is not so much to stigmatise these villainies as to give the Catholics of Germany some needed warnings.

## II. THE CATHOLIC FAITH IS AN INDISSOLUBLE UNITY

i.e., belief in God, belief in Christ, belief in the Church, are truths that hang together, supporting one another and forming one single whole truth.

TRUE BELIEF IN GOD. 'Take care,' says the pope to the German bishops, 'that belief in God be preserved true and unadulterated,' and he proceeds to list some of the aberrations fashionable in Nazi Germany and to deny that those who accept them are really believers in God.

The pope condemns, for example, those for whom the name of God is a mere rhetorical device; those who equate God with the Universe; those who understand by God 'a weird impersonal Fate, supposedly according to pre-Christian German concepts'; those who take the race, the people, the State or the form of government, the active rulers, and deify them with idolatrous worship; those who use the holy name of God as a meaningless label for a more or less capricious form of human seeking and yearning.

The truth is that God is the creator of all things, the sovereign lord to whom all that is owes obedience, rulers no less than subjects, law-makers as well as citizens. 'Only superficial minds can lapse into the heresy of speaking of a national God, of a national religion, or make the mad attempt of trying to confine within the boundaries of a single people, within the narrow blood-stream of a single race, God the creator of the world . . .': and in congratulating the bishops for the fight they have put up against these notions, the pope remarks that this 'aggressive neo-paganism' has been encouraged by leading members of the Government.

TRUE BELIEF IN CHRIST. 'No belief in God will in the long run be preserved pure and genuine if it is not supported by belief in Christ.' And, condemning the Nazi refusal to accept the Old

Testament, Pius XI observes that to reject this is to deny 'belief in the real Christ who appeared in the flesh, who took His human nature from that people which was to nail Him to the Cross.'

Moreover, 'the climax of revelation reached in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is definite, is obligatory for ever.' Nothing can be added to it, nor substituted for it, 'by arbitrary "revelations" that certain speakers of the present day wish to derive from the myth of blood and race.' "'There is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved" but the name of Jesus. . . . He who sacrilegiously disregards the yawning abyss of essential distinction between God and the creature, between the God-Man and the children of men, and who dares to place any mortal, were he the greatest of all time, beside Jesus Christ, or worse, above Him, and against Him, must be told that he is a false prophet' against whom the words of Scripture hold 'He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn.'<sup>1</sup>

TRUE BELIEF IN THE CHURCH. 'Belief in Christ will not be preserved true and genuine, if not supported and protected by belief in the Church.'

The Church is one—the same Church for all peoples and all nations. Within the Church all races have equal rights, and the Church is willingly enriched by all the special qualities that each race or nation has to offer.

Not all the members of the Church, it is true, live up to their high ideals. But this sad fact does not make it right for a man 'to forget the overwhelming sum of authentic virtues, of the spirit of sacrifice, of brotherly love, of heroic striving after holiness.' To conceal all this deliberately is perverse and unjust.

As to reforms, where reforms are needed, 'in the final analysis it is from the sanctuary that every true and lasting reform has proceeded.' The only genuine, real reformers of the Church

<sup>1</sup> Ps. ii, 4.

have been men consumed with love for God and their fellow-men, who understood that the first need was to reform themselves.

TRUE BELIEF IN THE PRIMACY OF THE POPE. 'Belief in the Church will not be kept pure and genuine if it is not supported by belief in the primacy of the Bishop of Rome.' Christ built His one and only church on Peter the Rock. To that Church alone, and to its authority only, have there been promised the guidance and grace by the Holy Ghost and that assistance from the Holy Ghost against which nothing can prevail.

The plan to set up a German national church is nothing but a denial of the Church of Christ, a manifest apostasy from the divine command to teach all nations; for only a church that is universal can undertake such a commission.

Sterility is the inevitable fate of every branch that separates itself from the living vine of the Church.

### III. THREE TENDENCIES DANGEROUS TO FAITH

The first is the tendency to use religious words which traditionally mean only one thing, in a new sense that is destructive of their traditional meaning. The pope gives as examples the Nazi use of the words Revelation, Faith, Immortality, Original Sin, the Cross of Christ, Humility and Grace. In each case he briefly notices the way in which the new use of the word caricatures or destroys its real meaning, and denounces this 'false coinage,' this 'wilful effacing of distinction,' this 'perversion and falsifying of the principal truths of the Christian faith,' and describes it as a 'looting of the sanctuary, a thing done to confuse men's minds.'

Secondly there is the tendency to consider Moral Doctrine and the Moral Order as something separated from Faith. Against this the pope says tersely: "The moral conduct of mankind is grounded on faith in God kept true and pure. Every attempt to dislodge moral teaching and moral conduct from the rock of faith, and to build them on the shifting sands of

human regulations, sooner or later leads the individual and the community to moral destruction.'

'No coercive power of the State, no mere earthly ideals, though high and noble in themselves, will be able in the long run to replace the final and decisive motives that come from belief in God and Christ.'

And God, who as lawgiver says, 'Thou shalt,' gives in His grace the power to do so.

Thirdly there is the tendency to sever, from true belief in God and His revealed commandments, the Natural Law which is the foundation of law and jurisprudence.

All man-made laws bind men's consciences just in so far as they accord with the Natural Law 'written by the finger of God in the tables of men's hearts,'<sup>1</sup> to be read there by sound reason not darkened by sin and passion.

The Nazi doctrine says: 'What helps the people is right.' There is only truth in this if the sentence is inverted, so that it reads: 'Never is anything useful, if it is not at the same time morally good.'

Here is the fundamental moral truth. Cut loose from it and what happens? In international life a perpetual state of war must ensue. In the political life of states there results a denial that the God-given rights which each individual possesses are inalienable and not to be disregarded by the State or suppressed.

True public good is, in fact, finally determined by man's nature as well as by the purposes of the community. The community is itself conditioned by the claims and rights of human nature; the community being a means, willed by God, for the full development of the individual. Any other way of regarding the mutual rights and claims of the individual and the community loosens the supports on which the community itself rests, and must menace, not only the peace, but the very existence of the community.

Pius XI then pauses to make three definite applications of this doctrine to the situation in Germany, and three declara-

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ii, 15.

tions as to the binding force of recent Nazi legislation. His words are so important that they must be given in full.

'The believer has an inalienable right to profess his faith and put it into practice in the manner suited to him. Laws that suppress or make this profession and practice difficult contradict the natural law.

Conscientious parents, aware of their duty in the matter of education, have a primary and original right to determine the education of the children given to them by God in the spirit of the true faith and in agreement with its principles and ordinances. Laws or other regulations concerning schools that disregard the rights of parents guaranteed to them by the natural law, or by threat and violence nullify those rights, contradict the natural law and are utterly and essentially immoral.

The Church, the guardian and exponent of the divine natural law, cannot do otherwise than declare that the registrations which have just taken place in circumstances of notorious coercion are the result of violence and void of all legality.'

#### IV. THREE SPECIAL MESSAGES FOR GERMAN CATHOLICS

TO YOUTH. The pope recalls that he stands in the place of Him who said to the young man in the Gospel 'If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.'<sup>1</sup> He recalls the many evil things which the Catholic young people of Germany have to endure and says that he is 'aware that many an unknown soldier of Christ stands in your ranks, who with heavy heart but head erect bears his lot and finds comfort solely in the thought of suffering and reproach for the name of Jesus.'

If anyone preach to you, to-day, a gospel besides that which you received at your Catholic mother's knee, 'let him be anathema.'

If the State forces you into a State Youth organisation, remember you have the right to demand that this movement be cleansed of every sign of an anti-Christian spirit.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix, 17.

No one intends to hinder true German unity, and the growth of real, steadfast patriotism. 'What We object to and what We must object to, is the intentional and systematically fomented opposition set up between these aims and the aims of religion.'

You are told much about heroic greatness, in order to belittle the humility and patience of the Gospel. Why is there silence about the heroism of moral struggle? about the heroism needed in order to keep one's baptismal innocence?

You are told much of the human weaknesses that show themselves in the history of the Church. Why are you not told also of the great deeds that mark every age of that history, of the great saints, and of the great blessings which they brought to civilisation and culture?

As to sport and the culture of the body—it is an exaggeration to give so much time to this that there is no time, even on the Lord's own day, for worship of God and the business of the immortal soul.

The pope confidently expects that 'practising Catholic young people' will not allow themselves to be overcome by evil, but will strive to overcome evil by good.

TO PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS. The pope's first words are of recognition of the great fight they have made, of encouragement and of exhortation. 'Be the leaders of the faithful,' he says, 'the support of the stumbling, the teachers of the doubtful, the consolers of them that mourn, the unselfish helpers and counsellors of all.'

Especially must they remember that the bitterness in the German soul which is the fruit of the years since the war, can be overcome only in the spirit of unselfish and active charity. But 'the first and obvious duty the priest owes to the world about him is service to the truth, the unmasking and refutation of error in whatever form or disguise it hides itself.'

TO THE FAITHFUL LAITY. The pope, deeply moved, congratulates all those Catholic Associations which, to the very last,

'have kept true to Christ, and did not give up the rights which a formal agreement, made in good faith and truth, had guaranteed to the Church and themselves.'

To parents, whose God-given rights and duties in the matter of educating their children are now the very centre of a terrible struggle, the pope says this:

'The Church of Christ cannot wait until her altars have been overthrown, until sacrilegious hands have set the houses of God on fire, before she begins to mourn and lament. When the attempt is made to desecrate the tabernacle of a child's soul sanctified in baptism, by an education that is hostile to Christ; when from this living temple of God the eternal lamp of belief in Christ is cast out and in its place is brought the false light of a substitute faith that has nothing in common with the faith of the Cross, then the time of spiritual profanation of the temple is at hand, then it is the duty of every professing Christian to separate clearly his responsibility from that of the other side, to keep his conscience clear of any culpable co-operation in such dreadful work, and corruption. . . .

'Meanwhile do not forget this: from the bond of responsibility established by God that binds you to your children, no earthly power can loose you. No one of those, who to-day are oppressing you in the exercise of your rights in education and pretend to free you from your duty in this matter, will be able to answer for you to the Eternal Judge when He asks you the question: "Where are those I have given you?" May everyone of you be able to answer: "Of them whom Thou hast given me, I have not lost any one." ' <sup>1</sup>

The encyclical ends with a serious warning to those Catholics who have apostatised and to the Nazis who are now working for the destruction of religion.

Of the first Pius XI says that 'the day will dawn when the horror of being in spiritual dereliction, far from God, will

<sup>1</sup> John xviii, 9.

strike the heart of these prodigal sons, when homesickness will drive them back to the "God who gave joy to their youth" and to their mother the Church.'

As to the others, the Cross of Christ must triumph, and 'then will the enemies of the Church, who fancy that her hour has come, soon recognise that they rejoiced too soon and were too quick to dig a grave for her.'

## CHAPTER VI

### FAMILY LIFE THE BASIS OF NATIONAL WELL-BEING: ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF THE ENCYCLICALS *ARCANUM* OF LEO XIII (10 FEBRUARY 1880) AND *CASTI CONNUBII* OF PIUS XI (31 DECEMBER 1930)

#### THE ENCYCLICAL *ARCANUM*

*Leo XIII, in his inaugural letter, spoke of marriage as one of the three foundations of our civilisation now endangered by the wild theories of the day. To its defence, it will be recalled, he rallied the good will of all his people. It is then not surprising that the first of all his constructive, social letters is devoted to Christian Marriage, the encyclical Arcanum, published 10 February 1880, less than two years after the inaugural Inscrutabili. At this time, although divorce was already a feature of life in non-Catholic countries—in England, for example, the U.S.A., in Germany and Austria (for non-Catholics only)—the only Catholic country in Europe with facilities for divorce and re-marriage was Belgium. But the bitterly anti-Christian faction now, since a twelvemonth, in full control of France were meditating the introduction of divorce. It is not unlikely that Leo XIII's great declaration was prompted by his knowledge of this. The encyclical is one of the simplest he ever wrote and it reads very easily. Here is the plan of its main divisions.*

**I. OUR LORD'S RESTORATION OF MARRIAGE.**  
*Christian Marriage is an outstanding example of Our Lord's work on earth, i.e., of His renewing the world that had sunk into decline. For Our Lord (i) restored to marriage its unity*

*and indissolubility; (ii) made it a sacrament; (iii) defined the mutual rights and duties of husband and wife; (iv) committed the defence and regulation of marriage to the Church.*

**II. THE MODERN ATTACK ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE:** *It is said, for instance, that marriage is not a sacred thing, and that in matters of marriage it is the State that should be supreme: refutation of these theories.*

**III. THE MISCHIEVOUS RESULTS OF THESE FALSE THEORIES** *and especially of Divorce.*

#### I. OUR LORD'S RESTORATION OF MARRIAGE

JESUS CHRIST, the Saviour of Men, came on earth in order to 'renew the world which was sinking as it were with length of years into decline,' in order 'to re-establish all things in Christ' as St. Paul writes to the Ephesians.<sup>1</sup>

This, in fact, is what Our Lord actually accomplished, for He imparted 'a new form and fresh beauty to all things, taking away the effects of their time-worn age.' And, in order that the benefit of this restoration should last 'as long as men should be found on earth,' He set in this world the Church, to continue His work, commanding the Church to set in order whatever might have become deranged, to restore whatever might have fallen into ruin.

Whence, what all history shows, 'the Christian religion has thought of and provided for all the things which are considered a benefit to states' almost as though this religion had no other end in view than worldly prosperity.

It is about one of these benefits that the pope now wishes to speak, about that domestic society, the family, whose beginning and foundation is marriage.

The institution we call marriage is not the outcome of any chance development, but is the definite creation of God. It is

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i, 9, 10.

God who is the author of marriage; and in order that this union of man and woman might still better accomplish the objects for which it was created, marriage was, from the beginning, a union between one man and one woman only, and a union between them for life. That this is so we know from the express declarations of Our Lord recorded in the Gospel.<sup>1</sup>

This primitive form of marriage was, however, gradually lost sight of, even among the Jews. Men began to have more than one wife, and also to break up their unions and re-marry while the first spouse was still alive.

This laxity about marriage was accompanied by a great laxity in sex matters generally, and, if the phrase be allowed, by a legally organised moral anarchy. It was the woman who suffered most under this regime: men made the laws and made them for their own sexual convenience, and the wife sank 'so low as to be reckoned only as a means for the gratification of passion, or for the production of offspring.' 'Marriageable girls were bought and sold'; children were regarded as just so much material wealth, to live or be destroyed at the will of the father.

What Our Lord did for marriage was this. He brought it back to its first noble simplicity by condemning the Jewish custom of divorce, and by insisting that no earthly power can dissolve a union which God has created as perpetual. Most important of all, He made marriage, as the Christian tradition has always taught, a sacrament, that is to say, 'He brought it about that husband and wife . . . might attain to holiness through this very union; and in that union, fashioned after the pattern of His own mystical marriage with the Church, He both made perfect the love which is according to nature and also, with the bond of the love that is divine, He linked still more securely the natural union of the one man with the one woman.'

Even this, however, does not exhaust the perfection of Christian marriage. For it has an end in view higher than that of marriage before Our Lord's time; namely, it is to be a means of

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix, 5, 8.

raising up new generations for the Church, 'fellow-citizens with the saints.' Also the mutual rights and duties of husband and wife are now defined and clearly set out: the husband is the head of the family indeed, and the wife subject to him — 'not indeed as a servant but as a companion,' so that her obedience shall not be dishonourable or unworthy of her position. The pattern of their mutual life is the relation between Our Lord and the Church.<sup>1</sup>

The regulation of marriage, now renewed in such excellence, Our Lord has committed to the Church. How faithfully the Church has carried out her commission, the history of twenty centuries bears witness. Early attempts to substitute a system of 'free love' in place of marriage, or to abolish marriage as unworthy of Christians, the Church fought strenuously and successfully, against the Gnostics, Manichæans and Montanists of 1600 years ago, as she continues to do against a host of adversaries in our own time. The Church also brought about the recognition of the right of the slave to marry, and the recognition of the equal right to marriage of women as well as men, and the elimination of the so-called right of the man to kill his wife for adultery while he could violate his marriage obligations with impunity.

The Church has also fought for the rightful liberty of the children to marry or not as they choose, and by her elaborate system of matrimonial impediments she has worked against noxious tendencies to in-breeding in families (impediments of consanguinity and affinity), as well as against fraud and violence used to wrest a matrimonial consent from the weak and unwilling. The history of the Church is indeed witness that she has been the best of all guardians of the human race in all that regards marriage.

## II. THE MODERN ATTACK ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

And yet Christian Marriage has its enemies everywhere, who condemn it as an ideal and strive to destroy it as a fact,

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v, 23, 24.

'who would fain pervert utterly the nature of marriage.' The root of their opposition to the Christian ideal of marriage is their general opposition to the notion that man is subject to God and must obey God's law, and this general opposition springs from the false philosophies to which these men adhere, and from corrupt personal morals.

Marriage is the source of all human society; and so these critics will not allow that it is a matter for the Church's authority. They deny that it is a religious thing at all, and propose to bring it within that more restricted sphere of man-devised rights and duties which is the sphere of the rule of the State. In matrimonial causes, they say, the State must be supreme: the Church has here no *rights* at all. Whence there has come into existence what is called *civil marriage*, with state laws that set up impediments to marriage, and judgements in state courts as to whether marriages were contracted in due form or illegally; and finally, all power in these matters is, 'of set purpose, denied to the Catholic Church.'

There is, however, a triple proof that these worshippers of the State above all else are here usurpers, first from the nature of marriage; then from the fact that marriage is a sacrament; finally from the history of the Church's action in regard to marriage.

In the first place, 'Marriage has God for its author, and was, from the beginning, a kind of foreshadowing of the Incarnation of His Son; and therefore there abides in it a something holy and religious; not extraneous, but innate; not derived from men, but implanted by nature.' The popes have rightly taught that *all marriage*, whether of believers or unbelievers, is a thing that is sacred. Marriage—as all the customs of antiquity and of the primitive peoples go to show—'has always been thought of as conjoined with religion and holiness,' and has been 'commonly celebrated with religious ceremonies, under the authority of pontiffs and with the ministry of priests.' 'Marriage is holy of its own power, in its own nature, and of

itself, and it ought not to be regulated and administered by the will of civil rulers.'

Secondly, the sacramental dignity of Christian marriages makes them the noblest of all matrimonial unions. But to regulate sacraments is, 'by the will of Christ Himself, so much a part of the power and duty of the Church, that it is plainly absurd to maintain that even the smallest fraction of such power has been transferred to the civil ruler.'

Lastly, 'the crucial test of history' shows the Church constantly and habitually making laws about marriage and acting as judge in matrimonial causes, even in times when no one will pretend that it was with the connivance of the State or by leave of the State that she so acted. Did Our Lord condemn divorce by virtue of any authority He received from Cæsar? Was St. Paul carrying out an agreed policy with Tiberius, Caligula or Nero when he followed Our Lord's example? Were the popes and councils which first legislated about marriage acting in collaboration with, or in subjection to, the Roman Emperors then persecuting the Church and enacting laws about marriage which Christian writers were publicly denouncing as unjust and adulterous?

In later times, when the emperors were Christian, popes, bishops and councils continued the same independent action in matters of marriage, 'however much it might seem to be at variance with the laws of the State.' And when the Christian princes made new laws about marriage, Honorius, for example, Theodosius and Justinian, they acknowledged that they only did so to guard and protect the laws already made by the Church, or that they acted 'by leave and authority of the Church.' The pseudo-distinction, invented in more recent ages by lawyers in the service of the State, namely, that while the business of matrimony as a sacrament concerns the Church, the State has a right to regulate matrimony in so far as it is a contract—this pseudo-distinction will not hold, and should deceive no one. For 'in Christian marriage the contract is insepa-

rable from the sacrament . . . marriage is the contract itself, whenever that contract is lawfully concluded.'

### III. THE MISCHIEVOUS RESULTS OF FALSE THEORIES ABOUT MARRIAGE

This mischief is inevitable, for what God and Nature have provided for man's benefit always ceases to operate when 'the rashness or wickedness of men ventures to change or disturb the order of things most providently instituted.' And to deny that marriage is a holy thing, to treat it as merely ordinary, is to uproot one of the foundations of Nature. It is to treat marriage as a different *kind* of thing from what it is in fact, and, given the wide function of marriage, it necessarily follows that the evils must be widespread indeed.

For 'Marriage was not only instituted for the propagation of the human race, but also that the lives of husbands and wives might be made better and happier . . . marriage also can do much for the good of families . . . strengthening union of heart in the parents; securing a holy education for the children; moderating the father's authority through the example of the divine authority; bringing about obedience of the children to their parents, and of the servants to their masters. From such marriages as these the State may expect a race of citizens' animated by a spirit of true patriotic obedience, and devotion to good order.

It is only so long as marriage is recognised as a union that is holy, is of one man with one woman, and is for life, that marriage will produce these fruits: it is from these gifts that 'all its fertile and saving power proceeded' in times gone by.

But to-day, man-made law tends to supplant the natural law and the law of God; and even the natural ideal of marriage is beginning to be blotted out from men's minds: even in the marriage of Christians, the power of the ideal is weakened by human sinfulness. How can it profit a State to devise a marriage

system that is 'estranged from the Christian religion which is the mother of all good: . . . When the Christian religion is rejected and repudiated, marriage sinks of necessity into the slavery of man's vicious nature and vile passions, and it finds but little protection in the help of natural goodness.' And indeed 'a very torrent of evil has flowed from this source, not only into private families but also into states.'

In fact, once the saving fear of God disappears, there disappears, too, that special relief from anxieties which is found nowhere else but in the Christian religion. And then the 'mutual services and duties of married life seem almost unbearable.' Husband and wife think only of escaping from the bond, 'which they believe to be woven by human law and of their own will,' and if the law does not allow this, they denounce the law as wicked and call for a kinder law of divorce. And what can modern legislators reply to such appeals? Are they not themselves the professed disciples of these same notions of what law is and what law should do? Whence, in recent times there has been a general movement to revive the divorce legislation which originated in the great catastrophe of the French Revolution, 'when society was wholly degraded by the abandoning of God.'

The evils that flow from the divorce system are manifest, surely! It introduces a new instability into married life, weakens the mutual kindness of man and wife, supplies a mischievous encouragement to infidelity, and works great harm to the education of the children. A new menace now threatens the stability of the home, and the peace of families and 'the dignity of womanhood is lessened and brought low and women run the risk of being deserted after having ministered to the pleasures of men.' Nothing is more full of menace, therefore, to the prosperity of the State.

And once divorce is legalised, so past history teaches us, 'there will be no restraint powerful enough to keep it within fixed limits or the bounds first marked out for it.' All history shows that, with the introduction of divorce 'an eagerness for

divorce, daily spreading by devious ways, will seize upon the minds of many like some virulent contagious disease.' At once 'quarrels, jealousies and judicial separations greatly increased,' while 'many lent their minds to contrive all kinds of fraud and device, and by accusations of cruelty, violence and adultery, to feign grounds for the dissolution of the matrimonial bond of which they had grown weary,' all to the dismay of those who introduced the new system. 'Divorce tends to the certain destruction of society.'

We must then—if we bear these things in mind—allow that the Church has deserved well of mankind by her care to guard the sacred character of marriage, and to defend its indissolubility, and by her increasing condemnation of the wicked laws which menace this. Wise rulers should be resolute to keep intact the laws that derive from the sacred character of marriage, and should co-operate with the Church, making use of the aid she proffers them.

For the Church does not deny that, in matters of marriage, the State, too, has an interest, and that it has rights here as well as duties. The sphere of the State's action is distinct from that of the Church, and the State too, is 'free and unshackled in its own sphere.' As to 'those questions which are, though in different ways, of common right and authority, the power to which secular affairs have been entrusted should happily and becomingly depend on the other power which has in its charge the interests of heaven.'

To the bishops the pope writes, in conclusion, a strong exhortation to see that Catholics are everywhere instructed in the fundamental traditional teaching about marriage; to warn their people that, for Catholics, merely civil marriage 'cannot be more than a rite or custom introduced by the civil law'; to bring home to them the truth that no power on earth can dissolve the bond of Christian marriage whenever this has been consummated; to remind them of the all important, proper spirit in which they should consider whether to marry or not;

and finally, to warn them of the dangers inherent in marriage with those who are not Catholics 'for when minds do not agree as to the observance of religion, it is scarcely possible to hope for agreement in other things.'

## THE ENCYCLICAL CASTI CONNUBII

*Fifty years separate these two great papal declarations about Marriage. In that half-century divorce, which in 1880 was an exceptional, and indeed eccentric, thing in our civilisation, had so spread that it was now the State which did not allow divorce which was the odd State. The number of those making use of these facilities was growing, the rate of increase itself increasing annually in really fantastic fashion. More than that, the practice of 'birth control,' as it is called, euphemistically, a thing never so much as mentioned among decent people for a whole generation after Leo XIII's letter, had, by 1930, become so much a common habit of life that, for many people, it was a practice that stood in no relation at all to morals. The upheaval of the four years' world war undoubtedly accelerated this flight from the traditional morality, and it had much to do with the appearance, in the 'twenties of this century, of all that mass of literature, 'psychological,' 'sociological,' and pseudo-scientific in very great part, which discussed so eagerly the new substitutes which must take the place of marriage, now that this institution was obviously about to disappear. It was not in the nature of things that Catholics could long live uninfluenced by all this mischievous development, and in nothing was the practical genius of Pius XI more discerning than in his realisation that the prestige and the very worth of the Christian ideal of marriage were now really doubtful for an immense proportion of civilised mankind. It was the critical hour, and the pope met it by this great and enduring letter. It is one of the longest of all the series, but, as the analysis shows, it is*

*planned on bold simple lines. Here are its main divisions and chief topics.*

**I. THE THREE BLESSINGS CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE BRINGS.** *Pius XI recalls Leo XIII's encyclical Arcanum; this new letter is meant to supplement it and to develop its main thesis, viz., that the foundation of all right thinking about marriage is the fact that marriage is a thing divinely created. The teaching of this letter Casti Connubii will be arranged around St. Augustine's classic schema of the three blessings of Christian marriage.*

- (A) *The Child: its Christian formation;*
- (B) *The Mutual Faithfulness of husband and wife: this is bound up with monogamy, chastity and a loving subordination.*
- (C) *The Sacrament, i.e. (1) marriage is indissoluble; (2) the contract of marriage between Christians is a sacrament.*

**II. THE MODERN ATTACK ON THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL OF MARRIAGE:** *general character and source of the attack: the attack considered as injurious to the three blessings of marriage.*

- (A) *'Birth Control,' Abortion; Sterilisation.*
- (B) *The Convention of Love Affairs with a third party; 'Emancipation' of the wife from husband and home.*
- (C) *Theory that 'Marriage is a purely civil business'; Mixed marriages; Divorce.*

**III. THE POPE PROPOSES THE APPROPRIATE REMEDIES;** *and, incidentally, makes a pronouncement developing Leo XIII's teaching about the living wage.*

#### I. THE BLESSINGS CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE BRINGS

The pope begins by contrasting briefly Our Lord's immense work restoring marriage to its primeval nobility and the wide-

spread modern attack on that restoration. In this encyclical, following—he says this explicitly—the footsteps of Leo XIII, Pius XI is going to set out once more the kind of thing Christian marriage is and to show what an advantage it is both to the family and to society; next he will describe and condemn the erroneous theories which are urged in contradiction of the Gospel teaching and condemn also the vices that militate against marriage; finally, he will speak of the remedies appropriate to these ills.

The institution or custom of marriage—the pope repeats Leo XIII's declaration—has God for its author, not man; and the laws which, deriving from the kind of thing marriage is, regulate marriage, cannot be 'subject to any human decrees or to any contrary pact even of the spouses themselves.'

It is true that, as well as God's will, man's will enters into every particular marriage. Each man is free to marry or not. But 'the nature of matrimony is entirely independent of the freewill of man,' and man once married has no choice but to submit himself obediently 'to the divinely made laws and the essential properties' of the state he has freely chosen.

The pope arranges his teaching—both as to what Christian Marriage has to give and as to the errors and vices opposed to it—around that threefold classification of the blessings of marriage which has been, since St. Augustine, a classical way of treating the subject with Catholic authors. 'Children, conjugal fidelity, the sacrament—all these are good, and because of them marriage itself is good,' so the saint's famous text declares.

**THE FIRST BLESSING—CHILDREN.** The child is the first blessing of marriage; not only is it a new human being, the most marvellous thing of the whole earthly creation, but it is a destined member of the Church, called to be, for eternity, the fellow-citizen of the saints and one of God's household.

It is in this thought that the Christian mother finds her deepest compensation for the sorrows and anxieties and pains attendant on her maternity.

Children are a talent, committed to the parents by God; 'a talent to be employed, not for their own advantage or for that of any earthly commonwealth, but to be restored with interest to God, at the day of reckoning.' And therefore the education of the children is an all-important part of the parents' office. Parents have 'the power and the right to educate' their children as they have the power and the right to beget them. St. Augustine sums it up well: 'The children should be begotten in love and educated religiously,' and the Canon Law does but echo this: 'The primary end of marriage is the procreation and education of children.'<sup>1</sup>

Nor should the faculty of procreation, therefore, be used outside the married state.

THE SECOND BLESSING—MUTUAL FAITHFULNESS. Various elements go to make this a lasting reality. There is, for example, Unity of Marriage—that is to say, husband and wife, equally, do not give to any third person what, by marriage, they pledge to give to one another; nor do they grant to one another whatever is forbidden by God's law. Marriage is then between one man and one woman, and, it is to be noted, not only did Our Lord condemn polygamy but He even forbade as sinful the wilful desire of such things.

A second element in this mutual faithfulness is Chastity in Marriage—the chastity of mind enjoined thus by Our Lord must go still further, however, if this blessing of Mutual Faithfulness is to be the splendid thing God means it to be. The marital relations of husband and wife must themselves be chaste, that is to say they must be according to the divine and natural law of the matter, with a becoming reverence for this wonderful work of God and for God's will in its performance.

This mutual faithfulness of man and wife St. Augustine most aptly calls 'the faithfulness of chastity,' for it is bound up with chastity; but it is a still finer thing, and grows more nobly, because of its connection with something still more excellent,

<sup>1</sup> Code of Canon Law, canon 1,013, § 7.

namely the mutual love of the married pair that pervades all the duties of their common life and is the very peak of Christian Marriage. 'The love of which we are speaking,' says the pope here, 'is not that based on the passing lust of the moment nor does it consist in pleasing words only, but in the deep attachment of the heart which is expressed in action, since love is proved by deeds.'

A third element assisting this mutual faithfulness is Loving Subordination. It is within a life which is thus love, that all the rights and duties of the married state are provided for, for example, 'the primacy of the husband with regard to wife and children; the wife's willing obedience where he has the duty of decision,' the wider obedience of the children. The pope notes carefully that this subjection of wife to husband does not diminish her rights as a human being, nor make her a slave to all her husband's fancies; nor is the wife, as it were, a minor. The husband's requests must be 'in accordance with right reason and with his wife's dignity as a wife.' The rule is intended merely to secure that, in the family, the head be not separated from the heart, and the pope points out that 'if the man is the head, the woman is the heart, and as he occupies the chief place in ruling, so she may and ought to claim for herself the chief place in love.' And should the husband neglect his duty, it falls to the wife to take his place in directing the family. As Leo XIII has already put it: 'the wife is not a servant but a companion.'

Mutual faithfulness is then made up of these various elements: unity, chastity, charity, and honourable, noble obedience.

THE THIRD BLESSING—THE SACRAMENT. By 'sacrament' St. Augustine means two things: there is the indissolubility of the marriage bond; and also, Our Lord's raising the contract to be itself a holy sign which produces grace.

The Marriage Bond cannot be dissolved: whence in every true marriage, although not in the same perfect measure in

every marriage, there is an inviolable stability, and this is an undoubted blessing.

Here we must note that, even before Our Lord's restoration of marriage, 'marriage even in the state of nature . . . was divinely instituted in such a way that it should carry with it this perpetual and indissoluble bond, which cannot therefore be dissolved by any civil law,' as Pope Pius VI wrote to the Bishop of Eger in Hungary.<sup>1</sup> And also that this stability is only perfectly realised in the Christian marriage that has been consummated. It is only here that the matrimonial pact is fully achieved, and only here that there is fully verified 'the mystical signification of Christian marriage,' i.e., that it is a sign of that most perfect union which exists between Christ and His Church, the union of which St. Paul writes in the epistle to the Ephesians.<sup>2</sup>

In marriages that are not Christian, or in Christian marriages that have not been consummated, the stability is indeed less: but even here, this exception to the ideal state of a stability that is inviolable 'does not depend on the will of men nor on that of any merely human power, but on divine law,' and 'the only guardian and interpreter of divine law is the Church of Christ.'

The benefits of such inviolable stability in marriage to all concerned—to the married pair, to their children, and to society in general—are evident. The certainty that their union is for life, is itself a source of strength to husband and wife alike, for the very completeness of their surrender each to the other demands that in return they shall receive something that is perpetual, a security that is permanent and not just for an indefinite time. The knowledge that they are thus engaged for life is also a defence against temptations to infidelity; there can be no anxiety about the chance of one's partner contracting a fresh marriage as one grows older, or less attractive, or if one becomes an invalid. And the perpetual character of the union is a continual reminder that the final reason for their marriage is not something transitory (whether this be earthly fortune or

<sup>1</sup> 11 July, 1789.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. v, 32.

just human passion) but blessings that are eternal. As for the children—who is there that needs, more than the child, an absolute security that its parents cannot ever cease to be, through their union, the foundation and background of all its life? Finally stability in family life is the secret of a stable, happy national life.

Marriage is also a holy sign which is itself productive of grace. This is the usual sense of the word 'sacrament' to-day, restricted to the seven particular signs or rites whose distinguishing characteristic it is that, to those who receive them worthily, the rite itself—if properly performed—gives grace, and indeed a special grace according to each of the seven rites.

The special grace conferred by the Sacrament of Matrimony is, according to Catholic teaching, that 'it perfects the natural love, confirms the indissoluble unity and makes both husband and wife holy.'<sup>1</sup> It is the actual contract which is the sacrament, so that whenever baptised persons really marry, they both of them, by the fact, administer to each other and receive the sacrament. Thereby they open for themselves a treasury of supernatural power to fulfil the obligations of their new life, i.e., they are specially helped—not only to understand with their reason, but to know intimately, to embrace firmly, to will genuinely and to realise in practice, all that marriage can and ought to be.

But, the pope is careful to say, the full fruits of this great opportunity are only reaped by those who co-operate with it. By marriage man and wife are in a manner consecrated, set apart for a certain work and specially assisted in accomplishing it, through the sacrament which thus sets them apart.

## II. THE MODERN ATTACK ON THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL OF MARRIAGE

The Christian ideal of marriage is, then, noble above all others and it cannot but be matter for deep regret that, to-day, this

<sup>1</sup> Council of Trent, Session 24.

ideal is everywhere more and more repudiated and attacked. By every possible means of publicity and propaganda—in plays, novels, the cinema—the idea that marriage is a holy thing is laughed at, and divorce, adultery and other matrimonial sins are so presented as to appear blameless. The same tendency is active in popular works of a pseudo-scientific kind, and the anti-matrimonial ideas which these books propagate are offered as the fruits of the modern mind emancipated at last from old-fashioned conventions and prejudice. So general has been the spread of this mischievous propaganda that the pope feels he must overcome his natural reluctance, and expose and condemn in detail the vices which it suggests and indeed promotes.

All these evils, he declares, come from one chief source, from the denial that the custom or practice of marriage has God for its author and that it was raised by Christ Our Lord to become a sacrament, and from the assertion that marriage is a purely human invention.

Sometimes it is asserted that nature is ignorant of marriage and its laws, but only knows a particular means of reproducing life and of gratifying a certain violent impulse to satisfy this instinct. Other writers will admit that in nature there is really evident a kind of rudimentary marriage, since, if human beings were not linked by some kind of stable union, proper provision could scarcely be made for the welfare of their children and the status due to man and woman as spouses.

The consequences of these mistaken notions are serious. If marriage is no more than an arrangement devised by man for his convenience, man can do as he likes in regulating marriage. And since the natural instinct of reproduction is something more fundamental than any merely human system devised to regulate it, this instinct—it would follow—may be exercised as well outside that human system as within it. It can be exercised, then, for its own sake just as well as for the sake of the objects which the institution called marriage has in view, and so, ultimately, the status and rights of the wife and of the prostitute are all one. No wonder that people to-day do not scruple to

form such temporary unions as 'companionate' marriages, and to demand that these be given legal recognition.

**THE ATTACK ON THE FIRST BLESSING—CHILDREN.** The pope, under this general heading, condemns 'Birth Control,' abortion and unlawful sterilisation.

The first phase of the attack is what is called 'Birth Control.' Pius XI notes bluntly how, to-day, many people speak of children as 'the disagreeable burden of matrimony,' and they advise that this should be 'carefully avoided by married people, not through virtuous continence' (which, if both parties agree, is allowed in marriage), 'but by frustrating the marriage act.'<sup>1</sup>

Now, 'no reason, however grave,' can make what is intrinsically against nature, accord with nature and become morally good. 'Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose, sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.' Sacred Scripture tells us how detestable in God's sight is this sin,<sup>2</sup> and the uninterrupted tradition of the Catholic Church's teaching has also always taught this. And the pope now repeats the condemnation.

Many arguments are indeed put forth to justify this sin, he says; some of them are just indecent; others are feigned or exaggerated. Nevertheless the Church is too compassionate not to understand and to feel very deeply the plight of the mother in danger of her life from the birth of her child. While her courage moves all our admiration, it is God alone who can reward her as she merits, and He will assuredly do this.

The Church also knows well that in certain cases 'one of the parties is sinned against rather than sinning' and the Church also declares that it is not against nature if the marriage act is done 'in the proper manner' but under circumstances—'either of time or of certain defects'—that make conception impossible.

<sup>1</sup> *Sed vitiando naturæ actum.*

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xxxviii, 8-10.

The Church realises fully, and is most compassionate towards, the sufferings of parents who find it difficult even to feed their children. And yet, the truth remains that no difficulty can release us from the obligation of obeying God's law where this forbids an action that is itself, of its very nature, necessarily an evil. God's grace is always powerful enough to preserve us from such sins, and the pope quotes both the Council of Trent and the condemnation of the Jansenists to show that this is Catholic teaching. 'God does not command what is impossible, but in commanding He warns us both to do what we can and, where we cannot, to ask—and He helps us so that we can.' <sup>1</sup>

A second sinful practice against the first blessing of marriage, and a second practice which nowadays it is fashionable to regard as justified more or less according to convenience and human conventions, is Abortion—i.e., the destruction of the unborn child. Some people think this should be allowed if the father and mother desire it. Others that what they call 'a necessity of medical science, or of social well being or eugenics' makes it lawful, and where their ideas conflict with state laws which punish this practice, those who think like this call for the alteration of the laws. More than this, they sometimes agitate for the establishment of abortion clinics at the public expense.

The principle involved—'however much we may pity the mother whose health and even life is gravely imperilled'—is this, that it is never right to take away directly the life of an innocent person. No one has this power, not even the State. Like 'Birth Control,' abortion is a sin as old as mankind, and the pope quotes the stern words in which, one thousand five hundred years ago, St. Augustine reprobated it. 'Evil is not to be done,' says Holy Scripture, 'that good may come of it.' <sup>2</sup>

The third crime against the first blessing of marriage, often, to-day, advocated as a much-needed reform, is an interference in the name of eugenics with the natural right of man to marry,

<sup>1</sup> Council of Trent, Session VI, cap. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. iii, 8.

an interference that goes so far that it is even proposed to make it lawful to mutilate certain people so as to render it impossible for them to transmit life. We must not 'put eugenics before the purposes of a still higher order.' To mutilate a man 'against his unwillingness,' and not 'as an infliction of grave punishment under the authority of the State for a crime committed, nor to prevent future crimes by guilty persons': this is 'against every right and good'; and if public authority so acted it would 'arrogate to itself a power . . . which it has never possessed nor ever can lawfully possess.'

Actually, 'the family is more sacred than the State. Men are given life not for this world of time but for heaven and eternity.' And though such people as these eugenists have in mind—i.e., those whom a careful scientific examination suggests will produce children who are defective—'are often to be dissuaded from marrying,' it yet is not right to consider their marriage as a crime. And where no crime has been committed, the State has no power to harm directly, or to tamper with, the bodies of its subjects. It cannot, for example, put them to death, or mutilate them, or have them flogged.<sup>1</sup>

Nor are individuals free themselves to destroy or to mutilate their members 'or in any way render themselves unfit for their natural functions, except when no other provision can be made for the good of the whole body.' This is Catholic teaching, and it also is the teaching of natural reasoning.

**THE ATTACK ON THE SECOND BLESSING—MUTUAL MARITAL FAITHFULNESS.** The whole attack on the first blessing of marriage is, in a very real sense, an attack on the second also; for the three blessings are interconnected, and what affects one must affect the others too. But there must also be noticed some modern tendencies which are directly opposed to that habit of mutual faithfulness which is essential to the happiness of husband and wife.

<sup>1</sup> The pope here quotes St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2a-2ae, q. 108, a. 4, ad 2.

This faithfulness, as has been already explained, is bound up with three factors, namely chastity, subordination (of the proper kind) of wife to husband, and true mutual love. Whatever weakens any one of these must lessen and tend to destroy the constant mutual faithfulness of husband and wife. Three modern fashions are to be noted as especially pernicious.

First of all, love affairs with a third party, that is to say the modern notion that there is a place in married life for friendship of a sensual character with some third person, a friendship that even goes so far as sexual intimacies. This fashion is mischievous in the extreme. The plea is made that some people are so 'over-sexed,' that their nature calls for something more than monogamous marriage, or it is said that more rigid views are narrow-minded, or part of an obsolete convention. Against all this we must set the unchangeable law of God, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery,' and the words of Our Lord, 'Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.'

No less mischievous is the new ideal of the 'emancipation' of the wife from the home and its duties. The suggestion is made that it is unworthy of a woman that she should be anything less than wholly equal to her husband and that she ought to be 'emancipated' physiologically (i.e., free to hinder herself from conceiving should she so choose), socially (i.e., free to hand over the whole care of her children and home to others, in order that she may have a career), and economically (i.e., free, even against her husband's wish, to set herself up in business and to make this the main concern of her life).

Such 'emancipation' means to the husband the loss of his wife; to the children the loss of their mother; and to the home the loss of its natural centre. And if the woman abdicates the kingdom where she is queen, she will become, as amongst the pagans, the mere instrument of her husband.

There is indeed one sense in which the wife is truly her husband's equal—in the rights which come from her having a soul like to his, 'rights proper to the marriage contract and insepa-

rably bound up with wedlock. In such things undoubtedly both parties enjoy the same rights and are bound by the same obligations.' Otherwise 'there must be a certain inequality,' and a certain mutual give-and-take, if the family is to prosper and the home to be united and stable.

And yet, as ways of life change with the years it must be that the social and economic situation of the married woman changes also, and the State should provide for this by new laws that adapt the rights of wives to the new conditions—always being careful to protect the essential order of the family, for the basis of this is something higher than human authority, 'namely the authority and wisdom of God.'

There is, finally, a modern fashion of demanding between husband and wife, as the foundation of their union and intimacy, not true solid love, but a certain blind similarity of character and tastes—what is called 'sympathy.' When this peters out, the marriage, so they say, is dissolved, for the one thing that linked the married pair is now no more. What a foundation of sand on which to build! It is the house built on rock that survives, the marriage founded in constant mutual chastity, strengthened by a deliberate and constant union of spirit. 'This will never fall away; it will never even be shaken by adversity.'

THE ATTACK ON THE THIRD BLESSING—THE SACRAMENT. Pius XI, in this section, does little but echo his predecessor, Leo XIII. 'As the salient features of the religious character of marriage, and particularly of the sacramental marriage of Christians, have been treated at length . . . in the encyclical letter of Leo XIII <sup>1</sup> which we have frequently quoted . . . We refer again to this, repeating here a few points only.'

The theory is still popular that marriage is a purely civil business. It continues to be asserted that matrimony belongs entirely to the sphere of civil and non-religious affairs and that it is for the State alone to regulate it and not in any way for the Church; and also, it is urged, separation and divorce ought to be actually

<sup>1</sup> Cf. encyclical *Arcanum*, p. 165, *supra*.

sanctioned by the civil law, and marriage delivered from any link that is indissoluble.

Marriage will thus become a mere matter of State or public order and the first contention of these theorists finds expression in this that the civil marriage ceremony is considered as the real effective act that makes the marriage: the religious ceremony is considered only a concession or a favour to people still more or less superstitious. Catholics, so this view of things maintains, should therefore marry non-Catholics, if they so wish, without any reference to the Church. The second notion, of freeing marriage from any indissoluble link, these modern theorists implement by their agitation for laws that favour divorce.

The pope repeats the arguments used by Leo XIII to defend the notion that marriage—all marriage—is a thing that is sacred, and that sacramental marriage has an especially sacred character.<sup>1</sup> Whence a holy reverence is called for in those who undertake it, and, therefore, those who rashly and heedlessly contract mixed marriages show themselves seriously lacking as Catholics.

Then, as to mixed marriages, 'Everywhere and with the greatest strictness the Church forbids marriages between baptised persons, one of whom is a Catholic, and the other a member of a schismatical or heretical sect; and if there is, added to this, the danger of the falling away of the Catholic party and the perversion of the children, such a marriage is forbidden by divine law': so the Canon Law which the pope is here quoting.<sup>2</sup>

Experience does in fact show, says Pius XI, that, not infrequently, 'deplorable defections from religion occur among the children of mixed marriages' and they are often the cause of an indifference to all religions and to religion as such.

Also, in a mixed marriage there is bound to be something lacking to that close union of minds which should be the glory of every marriage. And when this unity is weakened 'the danger comes that the love of man and wife grows cold and the peace and happiness of family life, resting as it does on the union of hearts, is destroyed.'

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Code of Canon Law, Canon 1,060.

The pope next speaks of divorce. Arguments for divorce, he says, are plentiful; they all come to this in the end, that whatever makes married life hard or unpleasant is sufficient justification for breaking the bond.

But against all the arguments—and the pope lists the most usual of them—there ‘stands the unalterable law of God, fully confirmed by Christ; a law that can never be deprived of its force by the decrees of men, the ideas of a people or the will of any legislator. “What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.”<sup>1</sup> “Everyone that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.”<sup>2</sup>

And ‘these words refer to every kind of marriage,’ to natural and civil marriage as well as to sacramental marriage. The pope quotes at length the decree of the Council of Trent condemning the theory of divorce, and reminds us that for those married people who can no longer live together with spiritual profit, the Church provides the remedy of separation.

Finally, with many references to Leo XIII’s letter and with long quotations from it, Pius XI insists on the value to society of marriages that are permanent, stable unions for life, and on ‘the train of evils that follow upon divorce.’

### III. THE POPE PROPOSES APPROPRIATE REMEDIES

Pius XI introduces what he has to say about remedies by recalling a fundamental principle, namely, ‘Things which have deviated from their right order cannot be brought back to that original state which is in harmony with their nature, except by a return to the divine plan which is the pattern of all right order.’ Leo XIII had already said this in the letter *Arcanum*.

The chief obstacle to any restoration of the Christian idea of marriage is man’s untamed and rebellious desire—what theologians call concupiscence. And, man cannot really keep this in check unless he first subjects himself to God. It is, in fact, the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xvi, 18.

law of this matter that whoever subjects himself to God enjoys a power over his passions and concupiscence; it is the rebel against God who has the experience of continual rebellion of these against himself, and the pope quotes a long vivid passage from St. Augustine in support of this.

Married people, then, must make it a first endeavour to saturate themselves with the notion of duty to God—of reverence for God. Nothing else will take its place. It is no use relying on the natural knowledge that comes, say, from such sciences as Biology, to be a restraint on man's carnal desires. Nothing can displace supernatural grace as a means to establish chastity.

Next, in order to shape one's married life according to the divine plan of marriage, this plan must be known, and known with certainty. Whence a need to hearken to the teaching Church. For though natural reason can tell us much, it can also make mistakes; and if it were left to the sole light of natural reason—or to the private interpretation of the truth that is revealed—to be our guide in the matter, we would be at the mercy of a host of fallacies. This, which is true of knowledge of the whole moral law, is especially true of what concerns marriage, for here there is active the keenest and most unruly of all human desires: here we can be most easily deceived and led astray, and here it is that observance of the divine law sometimes calls for 'hard and repeated sacrifices.'

Our Lord founded the Church precisely in order that it should guide us in such matters, and therefore, we should not trust too much to our own judgement here, nor only obey in those matters where the Church's laws agree with our judgement, but allow ourselves to be guided entirely by the holy Church of God.

There should, therefore, be frequent sermons explaining the marvellous creation of God that marriage is, and how the laws of God work to uphold it as a practical ideal. Instruction of this kind, and constant reflection on the immense spiritual reality of marriage, will be the best antidote to the new fashion of 'mocking at matrimonial purity and extolling the filthiest of

vices.' So will Catholics be led 'to fly as far as possible from every kind of idolatry of the flesh and from the base slavery of the passions.'

'Physiological' Education about marriage is, in fact, not enough. It is this religious kind of instruction that is needed and not 'that exaggerated physiological education' on which, to-day, some 'reformers' of marriage lay so much stress as a help to married life; laying much stress on these 'physiological matters, in which is learned rather the art of sinning in a subtle way, than the virtue of living chastely.'

Knowledge, even knowledge of God's law, will not, however, alone suffice. Husband and wife must be steadfastly resolved in will to observe that law, and, once again, no means is more effective to keep them faithful to their resolve than reflection that their state of life is sacramental, and that, by the permanency of the sacrament which they have received, they are sanctified and strengthened for the duties and difficulties their state carries with it. And the pope quotes S. Robert Bellarmine, one of the greatest of modern theologians and a Doctor of the Church: 'The sacrament of matrimony can be regarded in two ways: first, in its making, and then in its permanent state. For it is a sacrament like to that of the Eucharist, which is a sacrament not only when it is made, but also while it remains; for as long as the married parties are alive, so long is their union the sacrament of Christ and the Church.'

The root of the whole business of married happiness is of course that the parties be already properly formed when they come to receive the sacrament. The bases of happy married life—or of an unhappy married tragedy—are laid in childhood. Those who, before marriage, show themselves generally selfish will be, in married life, what they were before. What is required is generosity, both towards each other and towards their children, so that 'the home, though it suffer the want and hardship of this valley of tears, may become for the children, in its own way, a foretaste of that paradise of delights in which the Creator placed the first man.'

A more proximate preparation for marriage will be not to neglect to choose prudently and with care the person with whom they propose to marry, 'so that they may not deplore for the rest of their lives the sorrows arising from an indiscreet marriage.' This is a matter where neither passions nor worldly advantage can be allowed the decisive voice. God is to be considered, the true religion of Christ, one's own eternal welfare and that of the other party, to say nothing of the eternal welfare of the children to come; and the attraction to the future spouse should be 'a true and noble love, and affection that is sincere.' Parents too should be at least consulted.

The long encyclical closes with the discussion of a most practical consideration—'the perfect observance of God's commands' is, not rarely, made difficult because 'man and wife are in straitened circumstances.' The pope reviews the various ways in which they have a claim to be helped.

Leo XIII's teaching must be put into practice, 'namely, that in the State such economic and social methods should be adopted as will enable every head of a family to earn as much as, according to his station in life, is necessary for himself, his wife, and for the rearing of his children. . . . To deny him this salary, or to pay him less than is equitable, is a grave injustice and is placed by Holy Scripture among the very greatest of sins; nor is it lawful to fix such a scanty wage as will be insufficient for the upkeep of the family in the circumstances in which it is placed.'

Those about to marry should save, and make what use they can of provident and mutual help societies. Rich Catholics must aid their poorer brethren. Christian charity demands this of them 'absolutely.' The words of Holy Scripture are not empty rhetoric, 'He that hath the substance of this world and shall see his brother in need, and shall lock his heart against him, how doth the charity of God abide in him?'<sup>1</sup>

Finally the State has duties in the matter, especially in regard to proper housing, lessening the evil of unemployment, regulating the prices of food and other necessities, in regard also to the

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iii, 17.

fact that the working mother is 'a great danger to the home'; and the State should give assistance of every kind during pregnancy.

'It is patent to all to what an extent married people may lose heart, and how home life and the observance of God's commands are rendered difficult,' says the pope, if in the matters enunciated the poor are not protected and aided. The State cannot neglect the needs of married people without serious harm to the common welfare. To relieve the poor 'is one of the most important of administrative duties.' If they are not helped they must despair, and from despair come revolutions.

The State should also make laws to protect chastity, and conjugal faithfulness, in order to safeguard from the wickedness of the vicious that married life which is the very source of the State's being.

Such laws would do much, but even though enforced with appropriate punishments they would not suffice; nor would a demonstration of the beauty of virtue and its necessity be perfectly effective. To both these there would still need to be added that religious authority which fills the mind with truth, directs the will and, with the aid of God's grace, strengthens human frailty—the authority, namely, of the Catholic Church.

Once more, in conclusion, the pope exhorts States to treat the Church as a friend, and to join forces with it in this vital matter of marriage and family life. One notable way of doing this is to give some recognition to the Church's law of marriage. This one State has already done, and very fully, namely Italy, in the Lateran Treaties of 1929. And with this example that proves how 'the one sovereign authority can be united and associated with the other without detriment to the rights and sovereign power of either,' the encyclical closes.

## CHAPTER VII

### IDEALS IN EDUCATION: ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF THE ENCYCLICAL *DIVINI ILLIUS MAGISTRI* OF PIUS XI (31 DECEMBER 1931)

#### THE ENCYCLICAL *DIVINI ILLIUS MAGISTRI*

*In the first encyclical summarised in this book—the inaugural letter of Leo XIII—Christian education is declared to be one of the three chief causes for whose advancement modern Catholics must never cease to work. And in many of his later encyclicals, as the reader must have noticed, Pope Leo returned to this topic. His successors have been no less insistent. Pius XI treats at length of the crises of religious education in his encyclicals on the persecution of the Church in Italy<sup>1</sup> and Germany<sup>2</sup> and in the encyclical on Atheistic Communism.<sup>3</sup> The present pope, in turn, makes the claims of religious education one of the chief topics of his inaugural Summi Pontificatus.<sup>4</sup> But the most important pronouncement of all is this letter *Divini Illius Magistri* of Pius XI of 31 December 1931, for Christian Education is its sole concern. The English text followed here is that published by the Catholic Truth Society under the title, *The Christian Education of Youth*.<sup>5</sup>*

*The encyclical lends itself easily to analysis, under four main headings.*

*I. WHOSE BUSINESS IS IT TO EDUCATE? The respective roles of the Church, the Family, the State.*

*II. WHAT IS TO BE EDUCATED? (i) The subject of education is the whole man, body and soul, man fallen but re-*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 150–153.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 155, 161, 162–164.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62–63.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42.

<sup>5</sup> *Selected Encyclicals*, I, fifty pages: also published as a separate pamphlet.

deemed: (ii) *mischief of Naturalism in Education*; (iii) *education in sex matters, right and wrong methods*; (iv) *Co-education*.

III. THE SETTING OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. *Four elements to be considered, viz., the Christian Family; the Church as a background; the School; the World.*

IV. THE AIM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. *This is nothing more nor less than (i) to form the true Christian; (ii) who is also the best citizen; (iii) after the pattern of Christ, who is, also, the Model Master.*

#### I. WHOSE BUSINESS IS IT TO EDUCATE?

WE live in an age when discussion about aims and methods in education is well-nigh universal. Men more than ever understand that, to be truly happy, something else is needed than merely material possessions. Education, so they consider, will supply this need. But, only too often, the education they have in mind is a purely human training of man's merely natural gifts.

Now education is, in essence, a thing meant to prepare man for the ultimate purpose of his existence. This ultimate purpose—or last end—is God. As St. Augustine says, 'Thou didst create us, O Lord, for Thyself, and our heart is restless till it rest in Thee.' Therefore there can be no ideally perfect education which is not a Christian education. For a Christian education aims at securing the Supreme Good, that is to say, God, for the souls of those being educated, and the maximum of well-being for human society.

Education is the responsibility of three distinct, and necessary, societies, says the pope; these are the Family and the State, which are natural societies, and the Church, which is a supernatural society.

THE ROLE AND RIGHTS OF THE CHURCH IN EDUCATION. The Church's rights derive, in the first place, from the command

laid upon it by the divine founder, Jesus Christ, when He said: 'Teach ye all nations whatsoever things I have commanded you . . . even to the consummation of the world.'<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, they derive from the Church's place as the supernatural mother of Christians, for her mission is not merely to bring souls to the new birth of grace by baptism, but to form and educate them in grace afterwards. Leo XIII has well pointed out<sup>2</sup> how in matters of faith and morals God Himself has made the Church a sharer in the divine office of teaching, and has indeed granted her, in this office, to be free from error. The Church, then, is necessarily independent of all earthly authority in her exercise of this power; above all, it is the Church which has the right to decide what is helpful to Christian education, what is harmful to it.

How far do these rights of the Church extend? The Church will use every endeavour to promote literature, science and the arts—physical culture too—as far as these are necessary, or of assistance, to the purposes of Christian education. In other words, because of the point of view from which the Church is interested in education—i.e., the final end of man, about the attainment of which, inevitably, all his activities turn—there is no branch of education to which the Church can be wholly indifferent. 'To watch over the entire education of her children . . . is the Church's inalienable right.' She can never cease to care whether her children are exposed to doctrinal or moral evil. And her care in this matter is, obviously, a good thing for society in general.<sup>3</sup> History is witness how fruitful, in the foundation of schools of every kind, this care of the Church has been. From what other source, indeed, came the first universities? And how else, but by the care of the Church, have the literary masterpieces of the ancient classic culture been pre-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii, 18-20.

<sup>2</sup> Encyclical *Libertas*, cf. *supra*, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> 'For it is true, as Leo XIII has wisely pointed out, in the encyclical *Nobilissima Gallorum Gens* (8 February 1884), that without proper religious and moral instruction "every form of intellectual culture will be injurious; young people not accustomed to respect God will be unable to bear the restraint of a virtuous life, and never having learned to deny themselves anything, they will easily be incited to disturb public order."'

served? And even to-day, who else but the Catholic missionary has been the pioneer of education among the backward races of the world? No man who is not prejudiced can really wish to place obstacles to the educational activity of the Catholic Church.

There is no possibility of any essential conflict between the rights of the Church in this field of education, and the rights of the other two societies, namely the Family and the State. There is no possibility for such conflict because the functions of these different societies cannot overlap, all three societies deriving from the wisdom of the one Creator, and furthermore because the Church is a supernatural society, and, since its mission is to perfect the natural societies, it presupposes them and all their rights.

THE ROLE AND RIGHTS OF THE FAMILY IN EDUCATION. It is God who communicates, directly, to the Family its right in the matter of education. For it is God who gives the Family fecundity — 'which is the principle of life, and hence also the principle of education to life, together with authority, the principle of order.'

'The father according to the flesh,' as St. Thomas Aquinas teaches,<sup>1</sup> 'shares in a particular way that character of *source* which is found in God in a universal way. . . . The father is the source of generation, of education, of discipline and of everything that bears upon the perfecting of human life.'

The Family's rights, then, come before the rights of the State; its rights are something the State must not violate; and they continue to exist as long as the parents' duty to care for the child endures. The common sense of mankind agrees that existence comes from the parent and not from the State, that it is through the family into which they were born that children become part of the State; and therefore the father's power cannot be destroyed or abolished by the State.

Yet the parents' rights to educate their children are neither

<sup>1</sup> *Summa Theologica*, 2-2ae, q. 102, a. 1.

absolute nor despotic. They are subordinated to the ultimate purpose of the children's existence, and to the natural and divine law. And the parents' obligation to care for their children's education extends to the whole field of education and not to religious education only.

The pope then quotes, as an instance of recent non-religious support of the parents' rights in this matter, a judgement of the Supreme Court of the United States.<sup>1</sup>

History is witness how the Church has always defended these rights of parents. So anxious is the Church about these rights that, normally, she will not even allow the baptism of the children of unbelievers against the will of the parents; nor, under such circumstances, will the Church undertake to educate the children.

**THE ROLE AND RIGHTS OF THE STATE IN EDUCATION.** The State's rights in the field of education also derive from God, and they are given to the State in its capacity as promoter of the general temporal welfare of the people.

This common, or general, welfare 'consists in that peace and security in which families and individual citizens have the free exercise of their rights and . . . enjoy the greatest spiritual and temporal prosperity possible in this life.' The function of the State is 'to protect and foster . . . the family and the individual,' to respect their prior rights and also the supernatural rights of the Church. The State must also 'protect the rights of the child itself,' against, for example, neglectful parents. Again, not all families have the means to educate their children, and there falls upon the State the duty to supply for this deficiency.

The State should encourage the educational initiative of the family and of the Church, and should supplement their educa-

<sup>1</sup> Decision in the Oregon School Case, 30 May, 1929: 'The fundamental theory of liberty upon which all governments in this Union repose excludes any general power of the State to standardise its children by forcing them to accept instruction from public teachers only. The child is not the mere creature of the State; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognise, and prepare him for additional duties.'

tional work where necessary. For the State has at its disposal means beyond what any other society possesses.

The State has also the right to take measures to ensure that all its citizens are sufficiently educated to carry out their civic and political duties, and to ensure that they receive proper physical training.

But in all this, the State must be careful not to ignore the rights of the Church and of the family. 'Any State monopoly of education which forces families to use government schools contrary to the dictates of their Christian conscience—or even against their legitimate preferences—is unjust and unlawful.'

Nowhere, in all this, is there anything to prevent the State from making what arrangements are necessary to provide the country with future good administrators and with soldiers. The State has the right to 'reserve to itself the establishment and direction' of special schools for this purpose. But the pope here issues a warning that, just as an exaggerated nationalism is dangerous both to peace and to real prosperity, so the State should carefully avoid the excess of giving to the physical training of boys a military turn (and especially should it guard against this in the education of girls. To train girls as soldiers is contrary to all human instincts, Pius XI declares.). Nor should the State, for the sake of this physical training, make such inroads on the Sunday leisure that there is not time enough for religious duties or for family life in the home.

There cannot be any necessary conflict between the rights of Church and State in this matter of education. Between the two powers, as Leo XIII has explained,<sup>1</sup> there ought to be a well-ordered harmony, and Pius XI quotes the encyclical *Immortale Dei*: 'Everything in human affairs that is in any way sacred, or has reference to salvation and the worship of God . . . is subject to . . . the Church. Whatever else is comprised in the civil and political order rightly comes under the authority of the State.'

And St. Augustine's words remain as true to-day as when he

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the encyclical *Immortale Dei*, p. 93, *supra*.

wrote them fifteen hundred years ago: 'Let those who declare the teaching of Christ to be opposed to the welfare of the State furnish us with an army of soldiers such as Christ says soldiers ought to be; let them give us subjects, husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants, kings, judges, taxgatherers who live up to the teaching of Christ; and then let them dare assert that Christian doctrine is harmful to the State.'

## II. WHAT IS TO BE EDUCATED?

The pope, in this second main section of his letter, first draws attention to what is always essential and must always find a place in Christian education, and then he speaks warningly of three present-day educational tendencies which seriously endanger Christian education.

It is of the essence of Christian education, says Pius XI, that it proposes to educate 'man whole and entire, soul united to body in unity of nature, with all his faculties natural and supernatural, man such as right reason and revelation show him to be; man, therefore, fallen from his original estate, but redeemed by Christ and restored to the supernatural condition of adopted son of God, though without the preternatural privileges of bodily immortality or perfect control of his inclinations.'

Christian education, therefore, must in part be directed to strengthen a will that still remains weak, and to rule inclinations that still remain disorderly. Above all, then, the mind needs to be enlightened by supernatural truth, and the will to be strengthened through the use of the means of grace; sacred doctrine and the use of the Sacraments are, therefore, an essential part of a Christian education. Without these it is impossible to control evil impulses, and to attain the fullness of what Christian education offers.

Hence, and this is the pope's first warning—methods and systems of education which ignore or neglect the supernatural are false. To deny or overlook the facts of original sin and of

grace, and to rely solely on the powers of human nature, is an unsound pedagogic, and the pope criticises certain modern exaggerations in educational theory and practice which would allow the child 'unrestrained freedom . . . an exclusive primacy of initiative, and an activity wholly independent of any higher law, natural or divine.' Not indeed, as Pius XI is careful to remark, that those reformed methods of education are to be condemned which have made for 'a gradually more active co-operation on the part of the child . . . or which have banished tyranny and violence from the classroom.' The test of any system's soundness is whether it aims at withdrawing education from its dependence on the divine law. Those who labour to construct such 'emancipated' systems, really end by 'making the child the slave of his own blind pride and disorderly inclinations.'

The second danger against which the pope warns us is wrongly given instruction in the matter of sex—instruction which, for example, is based on the idea that young people only need to know all about 'the facts of life' in order to be preserved thenceforward from all temptations in these matters: or again, instruction which is indiscriminately and publicly given and, worse still, a training which deliberately exposes young people to temptation in order, as it is said, to harden them against the danger. It is false to imagine that young people can be fore-armed against the dangers of sensuality by means purely natural. 'Evil practices,' it needs to be recognised, 'are the effect, not so much of lack of knowledge, as of weakness of will exposed to dangerous occasions of temptation and unsupported by the means of grace.'

Thirdly, Pius XI describes as dangerous and warns us against the so-called method of "co-education." The pope censures this as 'false and harmful to Christian education' partly because it is—as a system—often based on the false idea that man is a being meant for a merely natural life, and not affected by original sin; partly because it is based on a 'deplorable confusion of ideas' which, instead of seeing the two sexes as complementary

partners, sees them as in all things equal and identical. The differences between the sexes, which bring it about that they are complementary the one to the other in the family and in society, 'ought to be maintained and encouraged during their years of formation.' There needs, then, to be, in the important formative years, a distinction between the two, and a corresponding separation according to age and circumstances. Especially is this needed in the case of adolescents, and in all that belongs to physical culture.

### III. THE SETTING OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The pope now treats of the setting in which the child is educated, for the setting must be in harmony with the purpose if the education is to be perfect. Four elements are discussed, the Christian family; the Church; the school; and the world.

The Family is 'the first, natural, and necessary element.' The best education of all, 'the most lasting and the most effective,' is that which is received in a well-ordered Christian family. The subject of domestic education is too vast for the pope to do more than mention it here, and call attention to the lamentable fact that it has steadily declined. Parents nowadays have all too little preparation for this part of their duty; the temporal cares which immerse them are a great obstacle to it. Again, there works against any real domestic education the modern custom of sending children away from home, even in their tenderest years, for one reason or another, economic, industrial, or it may be political.

Parents must, however, be warned that their obligations to train and teach their children are grave obligations and warned not in any general fashion 'but with practical and specific application' to their various responsibilities, and with some hint of the best method of training. Their own example, it must be urged, is most important, and they need also to be warned 'not to provoke their children to anger' <sup>1</sup> by their impatience and by

<sup>1</sup> Eph. vi, 4.

their ignorance of how to correct the children in a proper way. Parental authority is not given for the convenience of the parent, but for the proper bringing up of the child.

So closely linked with the Christian family is the Church that the two may be said to form one single setting for a Christian education. Here, in the Church, are the means of grace; here is an educational setting, the Sacraments, the ritual of the liturgy, the very material fabric of the buildings; all of this has an immense educational value. Then there is the Church's great system of schools, associations and institutes of all kinds that train young people in the ways of piety, and also in every kind of culture, mental and physical.

Thirdly there is the school; and to the school more than half of this section of the encyclical is devoted. The school is a necessary social institution, because young people need to be trained in the arts and sciences for the common prosperity of the nation and because the family is, of itself, unequal to this task. But, historically, it is to the initiative of the family and of the Church, that the school owes its origin. It is, of its nature, complementary to these; and it should, therefore, act in accord with them and never in opposition to them. The family, the Church and the school should form a perfect moral union, one single sanctuary of education. 'When literary, social, domestic and religious education do not go hand in hand,' writes an Italian educationalist<sup>1</sup> whom the pope quotes here, 'man is unhappy and restless.'

Therefore, the so-called 'secular' or 'neutral' school, from which all religion is excluded, is something 'contrary to the fundamental principles of education.' Actually there are not any such neutral schools. In practice they are all become irreligious.

Other types of the unsatisfactory school are the 'mixed' school (which Catholics and non-Catholics attend) and the so-called 'single school' to which all are obliged to go and where,

<sup>1</sup> Niccolo Tommaseo.

though there is separate religious instruction for Catholics and non-Catholics, the other lessons are in common.

What, then, is a Catholic school? It is a school where 'all the teaching and the whole organisation of the school, its teachers, syllabus, textbooks of every kind are regulated by the Catholic spirit, under the direction and supervision of the Church.' As Leo XIII once wrote: <sup>1</sup> 'What is needed is not only that religious instruction should be given to the young people at certain fixed times, but also that all the other instruction should be permeated with the spirit of Christian piety. If this is wanting, if this sacred atmosphere does not pervade and warm the hearts of masters and scholars alike, little good can be expected from any kind of learning, and considerable harm will often be the consequence.' So that 'the mere fact that a school gives some religious instruction . . . does not . . . make it a fit place for Catholic pupils.'

What about those countries where there are different religious beliefs? Is it not here impossible, by the very fact, to organise any other system than 'neutral' or 'mixed' schools? The pope does not think so. In such cases the State ought 'to leave free scope to the initiative of the Church and of the family to organise schools, while giving them such assistance as justice demands.' And actually this is now done in many states, to the satisfaction of all concerned.

In other countries Catholics have the heavy burden of providing and maintaining schools entirely at their own expense. For their sacrifices in this matter they deserve every praise. Whatever is done to promote and defend the Catholic school 'is a genuinely religious work,' a work of 'Catholic Action' indeed, and agitation for this purpose is not party politics but 'a religious enterprise demanded by conscience.'

The Catholic school will make full use of the best methods that modern times have discovered, and at the same time it will not throw away the good things handed down to us by former

<sup>1</sup> Encyclical Letter, *Militantis Ecclesiae*, 1 August 1897.

ages. The pope makes a special plea for a revival of the study of Latin, 'in our day, falling more and more into disuse,' and of sound Catholic philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

And Pius XI sums up many things in a brief phrase when he says that 'Perfect schools are the result not so much of good methods as of good teachers.'

The last element in the 'setting' of education is the World. It is no part of Christian education to remove young people from the society in which they must live and save their souls. They must, as Tertullian says, be sharers in the world: yet not sharers in its errors. Whence we must have an anxious care to forewarn and forearm them as Christians against the dangers that the world presents. How these dangers are multiplying in our time, through the bad use to which the great modern inventions can be put, the cinema, for example, and the radio! And always there is the danger from immoral literature. The pope recommends the work of those societies that fight these evils by means of suitable books, and of periodicals which review critically the immense output of modern literature.

#### IV. WHAT IS THE PARTICULAR PURPOSE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION HAS IN VIEW?

This purpose is to form 'the true and finished man of character.' This is 'the true and perfect Christian'; the proper end of Christian education is then co-operation, with God's grace, to produce this ideal type, that is to say 'to form Christ Himself in those regenerated by Baptism.' This is why Christian education takes account of the whole aggregate of human life, its every phase and activity, in accordance with the example and preaching of Christ.

The true product of Christian education, then, is 'the supernatural man'; the man, that is to say, who 'thinks, judges, and acts constantly and consistently in accordance with right reason illumined by the supernatural light of the example and

<sup>1</sup> Quoting Leo XIII, *Inscrutabili*; cf. *supra*, p. 7.

teaching of Christ.' Such is the true and finished man of character.

This 'supernatural man' thus described does not, however, 'renounce the activities of this earthly life; he does not stunt his natural faculties' when, by co-ordinating them with the supernatural, he develops and perfects them. And the fact that such men bring new strength to the material and temporal side of life, ennobling all that is natural, is proved by the historical record of the innumerable saints. Here, in them, we see the purpose of Christian education realised perfectly, and history is witness that it is the saints who have been the greatest benefactors of society, perfect models for every class and profession, for every state and condition of life.

And the source of all this valuable activity, what else is it but 'the supernatural virtue and life in Christ which Christian education forms and develops in man . . . life and virtue of which Christ our Lord and Master is the source and dispenser.'

Here is indeed an array of priceless educational treasure, a treasure so truly a property of the Church as to form her very substance. She is the mystical body of Christ, the immaculate spouse of Christ, and therefore a most wonderful mother, an incomparable and perfect teacher.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM AND THE WORKER: ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF THE ENCYCLICALS *RERUM NOVARUM* OF LEO XIII (15 MAY 1891) AND *QUADRAGESIMO ANNO* OF PIUS XI (15 MAY 1931) AND OF THE BROADCAST *LA SOLLENITA DELLA* *PENTECOSTE* OF PIUS XII (1 June 1941)

#### THE ENCYCLICAL *RERUM NOVARUM*

*Once the popes revised their policy towards what may be called the civilisation of the modern world, and instead of simply condemning what was directly anti-religious in it, began in a constructive way to criticise its achievement, it could only be a matter of time before they were brought up against the great scandal of the modern world—the condition of the working classes—as their predecessors had been brought up against the great scandal of the ancient world, namely slavery. The encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII—for all that its teaching scandalised so many Catholics—was by no means a bolt from the blue. For twelve years under the pope's active patronage Catholic social crusaders, moved by the terrible distress of the workers, had been investigating social conditions, examining the causes of the trouble and relating it to the basic principles of right and wrong, to the great principles 'Thou shalt not covet' and 'Thou shalt not steal.' *Rerum Novarum* did but sanction and crown a work long going on, with the pope's direct encouragement, in Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy.<sup>1</sup> The pioneer of it all was the German, Wilhelm von Ketteler, Bishop of Mainz. One of the greatest glories of the move-*

<sup>1</sup> For a description of this movement cf. Lewis Watt, S.J., *Leo XIII and the Social Movement*. Catholic Truth Society, 3d.

ment was our own Cardinal Manning, and Leo XIII himself, when Bishop of Perugia, had denounced, in a famous pastoral letter, the terrible nineteenth-century crime of exploiting in the factories the labour of little children. The translation of the encyclical is that published in *The Pope and the People* by the Catholic Truth Society;<sup>1</sup> its English title, 'The Condition of the Working Classes,' faithfully reproduces that of the Latin text. Here is an analysis to show the main divisions of the encyclical.

**I. THE SOCIAL CONFLICT: SOCIALISM NO SOLUTION.** (i) *Elements and Causes of the Social Conflict.* (ii) *Socialism and Ownership.* (iii) *Socialism and the Family.* (iv) *Socialism* (a) *means undue interference from the State, and* (b) *it rests on a foundation of injustice.*

**II. CATHOLIC TEACHING ALONE PROVIDES THE SOLUTION.** (i) *The General Social Message of the Church, e.g., human inequality; suffering; the mutual rights and duties of masters and men; the spirit of the Gospel and earthly life; the beneficent social action of the Church throughout history.* (ii) *Special Teaching on the State's social duties.*

**III. THE LIVING WAGE:** *its relation to property; the social effect if a living wage is paid and the workman thereby becomes an owner.*

**IV. THE ROLE OF PRIVATE ASSOCIATIONS WITHIN THE STATE, AND ESPECIALLY OF TRADE UNIONS.**

#### I. THE SOCIAL CONFLICT: SOCIALISM NO SOLUTION

LEO XIII begins by saying that the revolution, so long felt in political life, has now passed into the world's social life, and a bitter conflict is in evident progress.

<sup>1</sup> It is also published as a pamphlet, *The Workers' Charter*, by the Catholic Social Guild, and with a commentary in *The Immortal Encyclical*, by J. B. McLoughlin, O.S.B.

The elements of this conflict are the vast expansion of industry and the marvellous discoveries of science; the changed relations of master and man; the contrast between 'the enormous fortunes of some few individuals and the utter poverty of the masses'; the increased self-reliance and closer union of the workers; the prevailing moral degeneracy.

The importance of the matter cannot be exaggerated for 'the momentous gravity of the state of things now obtaining fills every mind with painful apprehension . . . and actually there is no question which has taken a deeper hold on the public mind.'

The present encyclical will deal with the Condition of the Working Classes, not incidentally (like previous letters) but of set purpose, in order to clear away all 'misapprehension as to the principles, dictated by truth and justice,' by means of which the conflict may be settled.

Two things need to be noted at the outset: 'It is no easy matter to define the relative rights and mutual duties of rich and poor, of Capital and Labour'; and, secondly, the discussion is not without this danger, namely, 'that crafty agitators are intent on using these differences of opinion in order to pervert men's judgement and to stir up the people to revolt.'

What are the causes of 'the misery and wretchedness pressing so unjustly on the majority of the working class?'

The pope sees the beginning of the trouble in the destruction of the old working men's guilds. No other protective organisations took their place; 'Hence by degrees it has come to pass that working men have been surrendered, isolated and helpless, to the hard-heartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition.'

The practice of usury which, under a different guise, has survived the Church's condemnations and still continues, has increased the trouble, and this also that 'the hiring of labour, and the conduct of trade are concentrated in the hands of comparatively few; so that a small number of very rich men have

been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the labouring poor a yoke little better than slavery itself.'

What is to be done? Is there a remedy? The Socialists have devised a remedy as is well known. What is its value?

The pope deals with two chief points: Socialism and the right of private ownership; Socialist theories and the Family.

THE SOCIALIST THEORY OF OWNERSHIP. What is to be said of this, i.e., as a solution to the social problem? and, secondly, as to its intrinsic worth?

Socialists hold that individual possessions should become the common property of all, to be administered by the public authority. There are two objections to this theory; first, that the worker would be the first to suffer were it ever translated into fact; and, next, that it is contrary to justice.

As to the first objection, the pope notes how the impelling motive and reason of a man's work is to obtain property, i.e., something which, thereafter, he may hold as his very own. He intends not merely to acquire a full, real right to remuneration, but a right also to the disposal of such remuneration just as he pleases. It is in such power of disposal that ownership consists, whether the thing owned be land or some moveable object. Now the Socialist solution would deprive the worker of the liberty of disposing of his wages. For, given the Socialist system, he could not do anything with his wages except exchange them for things to consume. He could not, through his wages, increase his resources, exchanging the wages for things which might produce yet further wealth, and thus, in time, come to better his condition. Socialists, therefore, strike at the interests of the wage-earner himself.

The second objection is that the Socialist solution is unjust. This criticism makes it necessary to set forth the Catholic teaching that private ownership is lawful, and to explain what lawful ownership really means. The Socialist solution, says the pope, is unjust, because 'every man has, by nature, the right to

possess property as his own'; 'by nature,' i.e., because man is a *human* being and not a mere animal: because man is a being that directs its own activities by the use of its own reason. Now because man is a *rational* animal 'it must be within man's right to possess things, not merely for temporary and momentary use, as other living things do, but to hold them in stable and permanent possession'; to possess not only things that do not survive his use of them (food, for example) but things which, being used, still survive, and continue to exist for further use in a time to come. How does this follow?

Man, through his reason, can link the future with the present, and, master of his own acts, he can guide his life, under the protecting power of God. He can, therefore, make choices not only in regard to his present welfare, but also in regard to matters that will affect his welfare in the years ahead. Hence man needs to own not only the fruits of the earth, but also the earth itself, from which the provision for the future is to come. Man's needs recur for ever. 'Nature must, then, have given to man a source that is stable and remaining always with him, from which he might look to draw continued supplies. And this stable condition of things he finds only in the earth and its fruits.'

The Socialist says the State alone should own the land. But there is no place here for the State's intervention. For 'Man precedes the State. Prior to the formation of any state, man possesses the right to provide for the sustenance of his body.'

In support of the theory that the State alone should own the land, it is urged that 'God gave the earth for the use and the enjoyment of the whole human race.' This is true; but it does not mean that God so gave it that no individual can own a part of it. God gave it to all means that He did not assign particular parts to particular individuals, means that the whole race should profit from it; and what parts different individuals should own would be settled 'by man's own industry and the laws of individual races.' The whole race must profit from the earth, and in this sense necessarily have a use of it, for 'even

though apportioned among private owners, the earth ceases not to minister to the needs of all, inasmuch as there is no one who does not sustain life from what the land produces.'

A further proof that private ownership is in accordance with the law of nature, lies in the relation of labour to the land and in the permanent effects of labour upon the land to which it is applied. 'When man turns his activity and strength to procure the fruits of nature, by such an act he makes his own that portion of nature's field which he cultivates—that portion on which he leaves the impress of his individuality. . . . It cannot but be just that he should possess this portion as his very own and have a right to hold it without anyone being justified in violating that right.'

Despite the strength of these arguments, however, obsolete opinions to the contrary are being revived, e.g., that while it is lawful for a man to own the fruits of the soil, or to have the right to use it, it is unjust that he should possess the soil outright, whether this be 'land on which he has built or land he has brought under cultivation.' But land tilled and cultivated is a different thing from that same land in its virgin state. The labour that has brought about the improvement becomes, in great measure, part of the land that has been improved, and 'indistinguishable and inseparable from it.' Who but the labourer should possess and enjoy this permanent fruit of his toil?

The common opinion of mankind is, then, right when it sees the origins of the system of private property in the nature of things. The practice of all the ages, the civil law and the divine law, all confirm and enforce this principle, that private ownership is a just institution. It is something pre-eminently in accord with the nature of man, and it undeniably makes for the peace of human existence.

THE SOCIALIST THEORIES AND THE FAMILY. The right of private individuals to own is seen in a still stronger light if we consider the obligations that bind a man, first from his place in

society as a whole, and next from his place in the particular society we call the family.

All men have full liberty to marry. No human law can abolish this right, nor limit its 'chief and principal purpose,' i.e., to give rise to the family. The society called the family, a true society though a small one, 'is thus older than any State and it has rights and duties peculiar to itself, which are quite independent of the State,' and beyond any power of the State to modify.

Since man as the head of the family is bound by a most sacred law to provide for its members and, looking to the future, ought to wish to protect his children always from want and misery, it must be granted that he has the right to own productive property, which he can transmit to his children by will, for in no other way can he fulfil these obligations.

The family is a true society, and, within the limits of the purposes for which the family exists, it 'has at least equal rights with the State,' and from the point of view of its older origins it has 'rights and duties which are prior to those of the community.' If the State hindered the exercise of these rights, instead of helping, 'it would, rightly, be an object of detestation.'

**THE SOCIALIST SOLUTION THEREFORE UNACCEPTABLE.** The idea, then, which underlies the Socialist theory, namely that the State, whenever it chooses, may invade and exercise control over the intimacies of family life, 'is a great and pernicious error.'

The State may indeed, and should, come to the aid of families that are faced with extreme necessity and lack other resources. For it is of families that the State is made up, and the State's welfare depends on the welfare of the parts that compose it. The State should also interfere when there is question of obliging one party to render to another its just rights.

But the State 'must go no further. Paternal authority can be neither abolished nor absorbed by the State, for it has the same source as human life itself.'

To set up State supervision in place of the parent—and this the Socialists tend to do—is to ‘act against natural justice and break into pieces the stability of all family life.’ Also, such interference subjects citizens to an ‘odious and intolerable bondage.’

The conclusion of this first main section is that ‘the main tenet of Socialism,<sup>1</sup> community of goods, must be utterly rejected for it only injures those it would seem meant to benefit, it is directly contrary to the natural rights of mankind, and it would introduce disorder and confusion into the commonwealth.’ On the contrary, ‘the first and most fundamental principle,’ for all who wish to improve the lot of the worker, ‘must be the inviolability of private property.’ The pope now turns to consider ‘where the remedy sought for must be found.’

## II. CATHOLIC TEACHING ALONE PROVIDES THE SOLUTION

How does the Church come to be concerned with this Social Problem? The pope insists, at the outset, that it is ‘in the exercise of the rights which manifestly belong to us,’ that he exposes the solution which follows. Were he to keep silent he ‘would seem to neglect the duty incumbent on’ him. True enough, others also are concerned in the solution of the problem; the rulers of the State, for example, the employers, wealthy people generally and the working classes themselves. But, ultimately, there is here a question of duties and obligations and rights, i.e., a question of morals, and to such questions the teachings of the Gospel give the only true answer. It is the Church that sets forth those teachings, that imposes appropriate precepts, and calls into being associations inspired by these teachings, to assist the worker and better his condition. ‘All the striving of men will be in vain if they leave out the Church.’

THE GENERAL SOCIAL MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH. What is inherent in, and inseparable from, human nature must be borne

<sup>1</sup> *Illud Socialismi placitum* is the Latin text.

with; for example the natural inequality which obtains between man and man. Men differ from one another in capacity, skill, health, strength; and from this inequality alone they differ inevitably in fortune. It is impossible to reduce society to one dead level. There is an inequality that is part of the nature of things, and all striving against the nature of things is in vain. Nor is this inequality an evil in itself. It is, of itself, far from being disadvantageous either to individuals or to the community. Again, pain and suffering cannot ever be wholly abolished. They are the consequences of sin and 'they must accompany man so long as life lasts.' To promise people a new age free from pain and trouble, where repose shall be undisturbed and enjoyment uninterrupted, is 'to delude and impose on them.' 'Nothing is more useful than to look on the world as it really is'—and at the same time to seek elsewhere for the solace to the world's troubles.

As regards the mutual relations of the employer and the workman, it is not true that these form classes which are by their nature, and inevitably, hostile each to the other. On the contrary, the nature of things calls for their constant co-operation. For each class needs the other, and one of the Church's most useful functions is to prevent the ever recurring strife, by reminding each class of its duties to the other, and especially of the obligations of justice.

What are these obligations? For the workers they are: 'to carry out honestly and fairly all equitable agreements freely entered into'; never to injure an employer's property or his person; never to resort to violence in defending their own cause, or to riots or disorder; to shun evil-principled agitators.

For the wealthy owner and employer, the obligations are: not to consider workmen as bondsmen; to respect the worker's dignity as a man and as a Christian; to remember that 'it is shameful and inhuman to treat men like chattels to make money by, or to look upon them merely as so much muscle and physical strength'; to remember the needs of the worker's soul,

provide time and opportunity for his religious duties, and guard him from dangerous occasions of sin in his work; 'never to tax the workers beyond their strength, or to employ them in work unsuited to their sex or age.'

But above all else, the employer's 'great and principal duty is to give every one what is just'; in this matter of wages 'to exercise pressure upon the needy and the destitute for the sake of gain, to gather one's profit out of another's need is condemned by all laws, human and divine. To defraud anyone of his due wages is a sin that cries to Heaven for vengeance.' Hence the employer is bound 'to refrain, religiously, from cutting down wages whether by force, by fraud or by usurious dealing.'

Is it not true, the pope asks, that if these commandments were carried out the social problem would be solved? that all that is needed for its solution is for the Church to be obeyed?

But the Church does more than propose this list of duties and obligations. She sets their observance in its proper place as a part of the soul's spiritual life, relating the intercourse of employer and workman to the fundamental facts that this life of earth is not the end of things for either master or man, but a testing place for both, and that the life of each in eternity will be according to their life here. The Church reminds both that they are, equally, the children of God, equally in need of the Redemption, and that 'no man can hope for eternal reward unless he follow in the blood-stained footprints of his Saviour.' 'By His example, and by His grace, and by the hope He holds out of everlasting joys and rewards, the divine Saviour has made pain and grief more easy to endure.'

The pope warns the rich that wealth is no passport to eternal happiness, but is rather a hindrance, and says that 'the rich should tremble at the threatenings of Jesus Christ—threatenings so unwonted in the mouth of Our Lord' and remember that one day they must strictly account to God for all their wealth.

What is the rule for the right use of money? the rich may

ask. It rests on this principle, says the pope, 'It is one thing to have a right to the possession of money and another thing to have a right to use money as one wills.' The pope quotes the words of St. Thomas Aquinas: 'Man should not consider his material possessions as his own, but as common to all, so as to share them without hesitation when others are in need.'<sup>1</sup>

Hence, 'When what necessity demands has been supplied, and one's standing fairly taken thought for, it becomes a duty to give to the needy out of what remains over—a duty not of justice (save in extreme cases) but of Christian charity'; it is a duty for which God will hold us accountable. We are to employ the temporal prosperity which God has given us 'for the perfecting of our own nature,' and, 'as the steward of God's providence, for the benefit of others.'

So much for the possession of riches in relation to man's salvation. What is the Church's message regarding poverty?

Poverty is no disgrace in God's sight; nor is the need to earn one's living by work any cause for shame. God Himself, incarnate in Jesus Christ our Lord, 'Chose to seem and to be considered the son of a carpenter—nay He did not disdain to spend a great part of His life as a carpenter Himself.' This teaches us that the true worth of man is in his virtue.

As for misfortune, 'God Himself seems to incline rather to those that suffer' it.

Such facts as these, on which the Church never ceases to insist, afford the best basis on which to unite the contending classes. If society were penetrated with such ideas as these the strife could not but end speedily.

Again the Church has been useful to an extraordinary degree in this matter of social peace, through the works of charity she has called into being and fostered, during all the centuries of her existence—works that derive their efficacy from God Himself.

We should never forget what History witnesses to, namely, 'that civil society was renovated in every part by the teachings

<sup>1</sup> *Summa Theologica*, 22-22e, q. 66, a. 2.

of Christianity'; that 'in the strength of that renewal the human race . . . was brought back from death to life.'

'If society is to be healed now, it can be healed in no other way than by a return to Christian life and Christian institutions.' For these are the principles from which it sprang, 'its primal constitution.' To fall away from these implies disease; to go back to them is recovery.

The Church is, however, by no means so concerned with the soul as to be indifferent to the needs of the body. It is her desire that 'the poor should rise above poverty and wretchedness, and better their condition in life; and for this she makes a strong endeavour.' Moreover, 'Christian morality, when adequately and completely practised, leads of itself to temporal prosperity.'

As to the Church's care for the poor, this has been a distinguishing mark of her activity from the beginning, and her very enemies have always praised her for it. In this matter of relief and assistance 'No human expedients will ever make up for the devotedness and self-sacrifice of Christian Charity. Charity, as a virtue, pertains to the Church, for virtue it is not unless it be drawn from the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ; and whosoever turns his back on the Church cannot be near to Christ.'

Nevertheless, in this matter of solving the social question, 'not only the Church, but all human agencies must concur.' What we must now consider is the part to be played by the State.

SPECIAL TEACHING ON THE STATE'S SOCIAL DUTIES. First of all, by the State is here meant 'any government conformable in its institutions to right reason and natural law and to those dictates of the Divine wisdom which we have expounded in the encyclical on "The Christian Constitution of States,"'<sup>1</sup> and *not* any special *form* of government that happens to prevail in this or that nation.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 84-102.

The foremost duty of the State is to make sure that its laws and institutions are a kind to bring about both public well-being and private prosperity.

This well-being and prosperity are dependent ultimately on a rule that is according to good morals, on well-regulated family life, respect for religion and justice, moderate and fair taxation, progress in the arts and in trade, an abundant yield of the soil.

It is by promoting these that the State benefits the citizens, and amongst these the poor especially. And 'the more that is done for the benefit of the working classes, by the general laws of the country, the less need will there be to seek for special means to relieve them.'

Moreover, the working classes, who are equally members of the State with the rich, are, in every State, very largely in the majority. 'The public administration must duly and solicitously provide for the welfare and the comfort of the working classes; otherwise that law of justice will be violated which ordains that each man shall have his due.' The chief duty of rulers is to act with strict justice—i.e., with *distributive*<sup>1</sup> justice—towards each and every class alike.

What exactly is meant by this due provision for the welfare and comfort of the working classes? In general, the purpose for which the State exists is 'to make men better.' More particularly, the distinctive purpose of the State is 'to see to the provision of those material and external helps, *the use of which is necessary to virtuous action.*'<sup>2</sup>

Now the labour of the working class is indispensable for the provision of such commodities. So much so that 'it may be truly said that it is only by the labour of working men that states grow rich.'

It is, therefore, Justice which demands that the interests of

<sup>1</sup> The rule of distributive justice is that offices, honours, rewards, be distributed among the community by its ruler proportionately to the merits and capacity of the several members of the community.

<sup>2</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Regimine Principum*, i, 15; the italics are the pope's.

the working classes shall be protected carefully by the State—‘that being housed, clothed and bodily fit, they may find their life less hard and more endurable,’ the commonwealth thus shielding from misery ‘those on whom it so largely depends for the things that it needs.’

‘The State must not,’ of course, ‘absorb the individual or the family.’ Its intervention must be solely for the safeguarding of both the community and all its citizens. It is when there is no other way of meeting the general interest, or that of a particular class, no other way of preventing harm to it, that the public authority must step in and act.

The matters which involve the interests of both the State and of its citizens as individuals are, for example, the maintenance of peace and good order, or ‘that family life should be carried on in accordance with God’s laws and those of nature,’ ‘that religion should be revered and obeyed,’ ‘that a high standard of morality should prevail, both in public and in private life,’ ‘that justice should be held sacred, and any violation of it punished,’ ‘that members of the commonwealth should grow up to man’s estate strong and robust, and capable, if need be, of guarding and defending their country.’

So that, ‘if by a strike or other combination of workmen, there should be imminent danger to the public peace’; or the ties of family life were relaxed; or Religion were to suffer through workers lacking time to practise its duties; or there were danger to morals through conditions of work; or ‘employers laid burdens on their workmen that were unjust, or degraded them with conditions repugnant to their dignity as human beings’; or ‘health were endangered by excessive labour or by work unsuited to sex or age,’ then, in such cases, there can be no question but that, within certain limits, it would be right to invoke the aid and authority of the law.

Within what limits may the State act? These are to be determined by the principle that ‘the law must not undertake more, nor proceed further, than is required for the remedy of the evil or the removal of the mischief.’

And, 'the poor and the badly-off have a claim to especial consideration' from the State, for, in contrast with the richer class, 'they have no resources of their own to fall back upon . . . therefore wage-earners should be specially cared for and protected by the Government.'

There are four fields especially in which the State should act.

First, the State has the duty 'to safeguard private property by legal enactment and protection'; the duty, therefore, to restrain 'such firebrands' as, under the futile pretext of equality, incite their fellows to lay violent hands on other people's possessions. The workers have a right to protection against such agitators, and lawful owners, too, against their designs of spoliation.

Secondly, the State should do its utmost to forestall strikes. The usual causes of strikes are excessive hours of labour, work that is too hard, the belief that the wage is insufficient. Strikes are so injurious to all concerned that 'the laws should forestall and prevent such troubles from arising; they should lend their influence and authority to the removal in good time of the causes which lead to conflicts between employers and employed.'

Thirdly, it is a duty for the State to protect the workman's spiritual interests. His dignity as a human being is something in which every man is absolutely the equal of the next man. No one may outrage this dignity with impunity. God Himself 'treats it with great reverence.' It is a matter in which even the individual concerned has no power over himself. 'To consent to any treatment which is calculated to defeat the end and purpose of his being is beyond his right; he cannot give up his soul to servitude; for it is not man's own rights which are here in question, but the rights of God, the most sacred and inviolable of rights.'

It is one practical conclusion from this that men must not be compelled to work on Sundays and certain holy days. Men must have these days free, to turn their thoughts to things

heavenly and to the worship which they so strictly owe to the Eternal Godhead.

In the fourth place the State has the duty of regulating the conditions under which work is done. The first thing of all is 'to save unfortunate working people from the cruelty of men of greed who use human beings as mere instruments for money making.' To wear men down with excessive labour is unjust as well as inhuman. The hours during which a man should work each day ought, then, to be regulated according to the time, place and kind of work that is done, for example, 'those who work in mines and quarries . . . should have shorter hours in proportion to the severity of their work.' Also the season of the year should also be taken into account. 'Finally work suitable for a strong man cannot rightly be required from a woman or a child.' Children should not be placed in workshops until their bodies and minds are sufficiently developed. 'For just as very rough weather destroys the buds of spring, so does too early an experience of Life's hard toil blight the young promise of a child's faculties.'

Woman, again, is by nature, fitted for work at home, and 'as a general principle it may be laid down that a workman ought to have leisure and rest proportionate to the wear and tear of his strength.' An allowance for this need for rest is a condition expressed or understood in all agreements between masters and work-people. 'To agree in any other sense would be against what is right and just.' For it can never be right to demand, or to promise, the surrender of duties man owes to God and to himself.

### III. THE LIVING WAGE

We come now to the most famous passage in the whole encyclical—the passage which is, perhaps, all that many people have in mind when they speak of 'the teaching of *Rerum Novarum*.'

The section opens with an explanation of what wages are, according to a well-known school of political economists. This

is the theory, that just wages are the outcome purely of the free consent of master and workman. Whatever these agree to is, by the fact of the agreement, just. The master cannot owe more to the man than this, be the amount what it may. The only way in which a master can be guilty of injustice is by paying less than the agreement stipulates, and the State's only ground for interference, in matter of wages (according to this theory), is to enforce the contract made. The justice of the contract itself depends merely on the fact of its being an agreement.

The pope declines to accept this theory. There are important elements in the matter which this theory altogether ignores. A man's labour is a personal thing, it is true, that is to say it is something bound up with his personality, and it is therefore his own exclusive property. If this were all, doubtless it would be within the workman's right to accept any rate of wages whatsoever. But there is a further characteristic of human labour.

Man's labour is *necessary*, i.e., without its results man cannot live. Self-preservation is a law of nature, and it is wrong, is in fact a crime, to disobey this law. Our conclusion about wages must be very different from that of the economists the pope is criticising, once we recall that a man's work is the means by which he procures what is required to keep him alive.

We must, in fact, admit that, in agreements between employer and worker about wages, not only must there be freedom, but there must be regard for the underlying 'dictate of natural justice, more imperious and ancient than any bargain between man and man.' This dictate is that 'wages ought not to be insufficient to support a frugal and well-behaved wage-earner.'

Should it happen that either 'through necessity or through fear of a worse evil,' the worker consents to take less 'because the employer will afford him no better, "the worker" is made the victim of force and injustice.'

For the settlement of disputes in this matter—and indeed for

the settlement of all the various matters connected with conditions of work, e.g., hours, health precautions, etc.—the pope recommends the institution of boards of arbitrators. This will prevent—what the pope never ceases to foresee and to warn against—‘undue interference on the part of the State.’

As to the amount which constitutes this wage sufficient ‘to support a frugal and well-behaved wage-earner,’ the pope, naturally, makes no attempt to define it in terms of money. What Leo XIII had in mind follows in the next paragraph. Here the pope declares that the worker should be encouraged to become himself an owner. ‘Nature itself would urge him to this. . . . The law therefore should favour ownership . . . and induce as many as possible of the people to become owners.’ The workman, if paid the kind of wage the pope has in view, ‘wages sufficient to enable him comfortably to support himself, his wife, and his children . . . will find it easy, if he be a sensible man, to practise thrift . . . to put by some little savings and thus secure a modest source of income.’

If the workers, in their own small way, thus develop into owners, society will profit in many ways. Property will certainly become more equitably divided. The present evil state of things will tend to disappear, i.e., the division into two ‘widely differing casts . . . the one holding power because it holds wealth; which has in its grasp the whole of labour and trade; . . . manipulating for its own benefit . . . all the sources of supply; . . . and the other, a needy and powerless multitude, sick and sore in spirit, ever ready for disturbance.’ There will be, also, a greater abundance of the fruits of the earth; for ‘men always work harder and more readily when they work on that which belongs to them.’ Then, too, ‘men would cling to the country in which they were born, for no one would exchange his fatherland for a foreign country, if his own afforded him the means of a decent and happy life.’

But one necessary condition, if these three important benefits are to be realised, is ‘that a man’s means be not drained and exhausted by excessive taxation.’ The State, once again, has

the right to a certain control over private property. But it has no right to absorb it altogether, and 'the State would therefore by unjust and cruel if, under the name of taxation, it were to deprive the private owner of more than is fair.'

#### IV. THE ROLE OF PRIVATE ASSOCIATIONS WITHIN THE STATE AND ESPECIALLY OF TRADE UNIONS

The pope has spoken of the role of the two public societies, i.e., the Church and the State. He now turns to what may be done by private societies, the last class of these agencies which are apt for the task of solving the great and urgent problem.

The most important of all these private organisations are the Trade Unions; and the pope explicitly prays that their number may increase.

He insists that such unions do not derive their right to exist from any permission given by the State. For 'to enter into a society of this kind is the natural right of man, and the State is bound to protect natural rights, not to destroy them.' So that 'if the State forbids its citizens to form associations, it contradicts the very principle of its own existence.'

The law, of course, retains the right to prevent association for purposes which are 'evidently bad, unlawful, or dangerous to the State.' Even so, the State must take every precaution, in doing this, 'not to violate the rights of individuals and not to impose unreasonable regulations under pretence of public benefit. For,' once more, 'laws only bind when they are in accordance with right reason, and hence with the eternal law of God.'

The paragraph on religious societies—confraternities and religious orders—which follows, is a similar defence of their right to exist and a denial of the State's right to suppress them and to confiscate their property. This is a protest against the recent persecution of such societies by the French and Italian Governments in the reigns of Pius IX and of Leo XIII himself.

Since there is evidence that many of the societies of work-

ing men 'are in the hands of secret leaders,' and that their action is inspired by principles 'ill-according with Christianity and the public well-being,' Catholic unions should be formed where this is possible. The pope lavishes his praise on the enlightened Catholics who have already done so much in this field.

In the matter of the organisation of such Catholic Trade Unions, it should not be forgotten that religion is all important. Provision should be made for the instruction of members in the Church's social teaching.

The societies should work for the introduction of conciliatory methods in trades disputes, and set up a common fund to relieve necessitous members, not only in case of accident, but also in sickness, old age, and distress. And they should do their utmost to find continuous work for all their members.

Such associations, if properly managed, might do a great deal to bring back to the practice of religion those working men who have either given up the faith altogether, or whose lives are at variance with it. The pope is not unaware what very often, has led to this. 'Such men feel in most cases that they have been fooled by empty promises and deceived by false pretexts. They cannot but perceive that their grasping employers treat them, too often, with great inhumanity and hardly care for them outside the profit their labour brings.'

The condition of the working classes is 'the pressing question of the hour' and the pope ends with a rousing appeal through the bishops, to the whole Church to co-operate in its solution. His last word is a reminder that 'the happy results we all long for must be chiefly brought about by the plentiful outpouring of true Christian Charity.'

## THE ENCYCLICAL QUADRAGESIMO ANNO

*This encyclical would seem hardly to need an introductory note, for, commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the ap*

pearance of *Rerum Novarum*, its own opening pages tell the story of Catholic social developments in the intervening years. It may, however, be useful to list some of the papal social activities of those forty years. There is, first of all, the encyclical *Graves de Communi* of Leo XIII (18 January 1901) which ended the last attempt on the part of highly placed Catholics to maintain that Catholicism and Democracy are incompatible, and at the same time warned Catholic democrats against extravagances of language and action. A translation of this important text will be found in *The Pope and the People* (pp. 169-181). There is also printed in that collection the kind of code to guide Catholic social and political activity which Pius X compiled from Leo XIII's writings. This is the letter *Fin Dalla Prima* of 18 December 1903. The short reign of this pope, packed with a variety of practical reforms, does not stand out as adding very much to the corpus of social teaching produced by Leo XIII. But we need to note the appearance in it of the first encyclical on Catholic Action, the letter *Il Fermo Proposito* of 11 June 1905, addressed to the bishops of Italy (extracts in *The Pope and the People*). The still shorter reign of Benedict XV was wholly taken up with the World War of 1914-1918 and the world chaos that followed. Nevertheless we may recall the insistence in his inaugural encyclical *Ad Beatissimi* (already summarised) that bishops must continually keep before their peoples the teaching of Leo XIII's 'truly memorable encyclicals.' And mention must also be made of Benedict XV's stirring letter to the Bishop of Bergamo (11 March 1920) in which the pope declares: 'It is Our will that priests consider it as one of their duties to give as much of their life as possible to social science and social action, by study, observation and work. . . . Let no member of the clergy suppose that activity of this kind is something foreign to his priestly ministry because the field in which it is exercised is economic. It is precisely in this field that the eternal salvation of souls is imperilled. . . .'

That Pius XI would, sooner or later, treat at length the ques-

tion of the workman and his employer might easily have been inferred from the stern warning given in his inaugural to those Catholics who act as though the teaching and precepts of Leo XIII 'had lost their native strength and authority or were completely obsolete.' Seven years later than this, a most important reply given by one of the Roman Congregations to an enquiry from a board of Catholic employers<sup>1</sup> in France showed how closely the pope was observing the contemporary scene, and also how very much alive was the spirit of Leo XIII. Then came the brief declaration about the living wage in the encyclical *Casti Connubii* (already analysed)<sup>2</sup> and, five months later, the letter now to be studied.

Quadragesimo Anno is one of the longest of Pius XI's encyclicals (fifty-nine pages in the English translation). It is closely reasoned, but clearly written, and easily divisible according to its subject matter. The translation followed here is that published jointly by the Catholic Truth Society and the Catholic Social Guild as a pamphlet with the title, 'The Social Order: its Reconstruction and Perfection.'<sup>3</sup> The Latin text bears a much longer title: 'On reconstructing the Social Order and perfecting it according to the pattern of the Law of the Gospel, to commemorate the Fortieth Anniversary of Leo XIII's Encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*.'

It is an interesting detail that, for once, the pope has departed from the usual convention of addressing his letter only to the bishops of the Catholic world, by adding 'and also to all faithful Christians of the Catholic world.'

Here is an analysis of the encyclical.

**I. THE FRUITS OF RERUM NOVARUM.** Development of a truly Catholic Social Science; General Abandonment by States of Laissez Faire policy in Social Matters; Growth of Trade Union Spirit among Catholics.

<sup>1</sup> Translation published by the Catholic Social Guild, *Trades Unions and Employers' Associations—The Catholic View*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> Also in *Selected Encyclicals*, I.

II. LEO XIII'S TEACHING DEFENDED AND DEVELOPED: (a) *Ownership*; (b) *Capital and Labour*; (c) *the Emancipation of the Proletariat*; (d) *the Just Wage*; (e) *the Reconstruction of the Social System or Order*.

III. THE ECONOMIC REGIME OF TO-DAY SURVEYED AND JUDGED.

IV. THE SOCIALISM OF TO-DAY SURVEYED AND JUDGED: *Communists and Socialists; Is a middle course possible?; Can a Catholic be also a Socialist?*

V. THE REAL ROOT OF THE SOCIAL DISORDER: THE ULTIMATE REMEDY.

#### I. THE FRUITS OF 'RERUM NOVARUM'

Pius XI celebrates in this encyclical the fortieth anniversary of Leo XIII's letter *Rerum Novarum*.<sup>1</sup>

The pope begins by recalling the times in which Leo XIII's letter appeared. It was the hey-day of almost uncontrolled capitalist development; the hey-day, too, of economic liberalism. Competition, it was almost everywhere believed, should be absolutely free, and the State should leave industrial problems to be solved by those directly concerned, the workmen and their employers. Mankind was increasingly dividing into two classes, those who enjoyed all the advantages supplied by the modern inventions, and the vast multitude of poverty-stricken workers who produced the profits on which the other class lived, 'and who struggled in vain to escape from the difficulties which encompassed them.' This state of things the wealthy found 'quite satisfactory,' though the workers were more and more restive under it.

Catholic opinion was divided. There were some 'who could in no way persuade themselves that so enormous and unjust a difference in the distribution of temporal goods' was what God intended, and who sought for a remedy: but such Catholics were often looked on with suspicion by their fellow-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, pp. 206-225.

Catholics, and also they were by no means agreed among themselves as to remedies and policies. To all this Catholic questioning *Rerum Novarum* gave an authoritative answer.

Pius XI recalls the world-wide enthusiasm that greeted Leo's letter, and also the dismay in certain—even Catholic—quarters. It was 'so unexpectedly in advance of its time.' Hence the slow of heart scorned it, the timorous were afraid of it, and many who professed to admire it regarded it as no more than a utopian dream.

This fortieth anniversary is for Pius XI an opportunity to recall what benefits have resulted from Leo XIII's action, to defend Leo's teaching—his 'economic and social doctrine'—against certain doubts and to develop some of its details, and finally to pass a judgement on the economic regime of to-day and on modern Socialism, to explain wherein lies the root cause of the social disorder and to point out the only thing that will cure it.

The effect of *Rerum Novarum* in these last forty years has been immense. In the first place, there dates from it a real renaissance, within the Church, of the Catholic social conscience. The encyclical settled, once and for all, that it is the duty of the Church to preach everywhere a doctrine relating to the world as a social-economic organism; and later popes, and numerous bishops in many countries, have followed the example of Leo XIII, interpreting, commenting and applying what he taught. All over the world priests and laymen have been roused and encouraged to a new kind of social study and have 'thus evolved a truly Catholic social science.' But this new Catholic interest in the social question has gone still further. It has produced innumerable societies for the guidance and assistance of the worker, even in material ways, and above all it has produced Catholic Trade Unions.

In these forty years the State, too, has everywhere shown itself conscious, in a new way, of its duty to intervene in social and economic matters for the protection of the rights of the

worker. It is true that already, before the *Rerum Novarum*, there were states which provided for the more urgent needs of the working people, and which 'had checked the more flagrant injustices perpetrated against them.' But much more has been done in this since 1891. In these later reforms, Catholic publicists—priests among them—thoroughly imbued with Leo XIII's teaching, have had a leading share. Most important of all, perhaps, 'As a result of these steady and tireless efforts, there has arisen a new branch of law unknown to earlier times, securing those sacred rights of the working man which proceed from his dignity as a man and as a Christian'; laws, for example, about the family, about housing, workshops, wages, and employment risks. And in all this beneficent social legislation Pius XI sees much which suggests that *Rerum Novarum* partly inspired it.

Leo XIII had also looked for help to the actual contendants in the social struggle, to the action of employers and of workmen. Challenging the then fashionable teaching of the economic theorists and jurists, he had boldly defended the right of the workmen to form Trade Unions, and had advocated joint unions of workers and employers. Catholics also, Pius XI notes, were to be found among those who, at that time, looked suspiciously on the Trade Union movement as the beginnings of mischievous revolution.

*Rerum Novarum* made it impossible any longer to mask such prejudice as a Catholic opinion. Gradually, Catholic Trade Unions were formed, where this was feasible, and under the same inspiration Catholic professional unions of all kinds. There was, however, less success with the unions of employers which Leo XIII had also wished to see founded.

## II. LEO XIII'S TEACHING DEFENDED AND DEVELOPED <sup>1</sup>

This is the longest division of the encyclical (7,000 words out of 18,000). In it the pope examines four points which con-

<sup>1</sup> 'A more precise application and some amplification of Leo XIII's doctrine,' says Pius XI.

cern directly the individual—namely, Ownership, Capital and Labour, the Emancipation of the Proletariat and the Just Wage—and then, in a long concluding section, he deals with the actual reconstruction of the social system.

This second main division of the encyclical opens with a boldly worded statement that the Church has the right, and the duty, 'to deal as an authority with social and economic problems': not, indeed, to decide the discussions of a technical kind that must arise once reform and reconstruction begin, but to decide the question whether the underlying principles of any particular reform are right or wrong. The reason is simple; 'the deposit of truth entrusted to Us by God, and Our weighty office of declaring, interpreting and urging, in season and out of season, the entire moral law, demand that both the social order and economic life be brought within Our supreme jurisdiction.'

Economic life, the pope continues, is something that is guided by its own principles in its own domain. The same is true of moral conduct. But these two spheres of activity are not so dissociated, so alien each from the other, that economic life is in no way dependent on morals. And to maintain the contrary is to maintain what is false. Economic laws determine what human effort can achieve, and by what means. These economic laws are the discovery of reason; but reason can also discover what, in the design of God, is the ultimate purpose of the whole system of things considered from the point of view of economics. The point of view of economics is, however, only one particular way of regarding the universe. Economic purposes and aims are only particular purposes and aims. And particular aims must be subordinated to the general, ultimate aim or purpose of things. It is the function of the moral law—in contradistinction with, say, the economic law—to direct our activities (in whatever sphere these may lie) towards those purposes or objects of that particular sphere of life which correspond with the general ultimate purpose of all. 'If this [moral] law be faithfully obeyed, the result will be that par-

tical economic purposes . . . will fall into their due place in the general system of purposes,' and we shall be able, through the pursuit of economic purposes, to rise to the first purpose of all things, namely God.

OWNERSHIP OR THE RIGHT TO OWN. Leo XIII, and all Catholic theologians, have always taught that the right to own has a twofold character for it concerns the individual, and it concerns the good of the community. They all, that is to say, assert that God gave man this right to possess things as his own first 'so that individuals might be able to provide for their own needs and the needs of their families' and then in order that, through the right of ownership, the goods provided by God 'for the whole human race may really serve this purpose.'

There is a twofold danger in discussions about ownership against which we must guard: if the second, i.e., the social or public, aspect of ownership is not sufficiently borne in mind, we risk falling into 'individualism'; on the other hand, if it is the first, i.e., the private and individual, characteristic of ownership that is minimised, we risk the error of 'collectivism.' These dangers we cannot safely disregard. If not kept in mind, the pope warns us, they will lead Catholics to that modernism in morals which the encyclical *Ubi Arcano Dei*<sup>1</sup> describes.

Now, regarding ownership, it is first of all extremely important,<sup>2</sup> as Leo XIII noted, to distinguish between (a) the right to own and (b) the use of that right. The right to own is governed and protected by the rules of what is called Commutative Justice;<sup>3</sup> but the use of the right to own—i.e., the rightful or wrongful use of the right—is a matter which falls under other virtues. The right to own, therefore, is not dependent on the good use of that right; the right of property is not 'destroyed or lost by its mere abuse, or non-use.' And 'it is a grievous error so to weaken the individual character of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> A 'fundamental principle' indeed, says Pius XI.

<sup>3</sup> This is the justice which governs exchanges: its rule is that for what is taken an absolutely equal value must be given.

ownership, as actually to destroy it.' But, on the other hand, every effort must be made—and those who give themselves to these efforts deserve great praise—to determine what precisely the social duties are that follow from ownership, and what are the limits set by the needs of social life first to a man's right of ownership, and then to his use of what he owns.

'Ownership, like other elements of social life, is not absolutely rigid. . . . How varied, indeed, are the forms which property has assumed.' 'The defining of private possession,' as Leo XIII has already said, 'has been left by God to man's own industry and to the laws of each particular people.' It is in fact one of the functions of the State to lay down in detail what is lawful and what unlawful in the owner's use of his property. In so legislating, the State will, of course, be careful not to act without regard to rights that are fundamental, man's natural right to own, for example, and his natural right to dispose of his property by will. The State, when it 'adjusts ownership to meet the need of the public welfare,' protects ownership from the inevitable catastrophe that would follow upon its becoming, through abuse, a hindrance to the public good.

**CAPITAL AND LABOUR.** As to labour, there is one form of it—namely, the labour which a man employs as his own master—which gives him a claim to all its fruits. But there is another form also, the labour which a man hires out to another and which is applied to the capital of another. It is of this kind of labour that the pope is now going to speak. It is this of which Leo XIII spoke when he said: 'It is only by the labour of working men that States grow rich.' And, says Pius XI, it is self-evident that 'the huge possessions which constitute human wealth . . . flow from the hands of the working man.'

On the other hand, it is no less evident that this toil would be ineffective had there not been already in existence the vast, God-created resources of natural wealth. And all this wealth is owned by someone; indeed, that everything should have somewhere its proper owner is a condition of order in life, and

demanding therefore by the natural law. If, then, a man has not property of his own to which to apply his labour, 'an alliance must be formed between his labour and his neighbour's property.' That capital and labour form such an alliance is an obvious essential condition of social well-being.

There has not, however, always been, between these forces, that accord which the situation calls for. Capital, for instance, 'was able, for a long time, to appropriate too much to itself.' It 'left the worker with the barest minimum' sufficient to keep him alive and active. And this state of things was, as it were, consecrated by the political economists who agreed that this was an inevitable development due to 'inexorable economic law' and that things must always be like this. Certainly, for a long time, 'the steady pressure of economic and social tendencies was in this direction.'

The cause of the workers, exasperated as they were by such conditions—which the teachings of the so-called Manchester school would have riveted on them as an eternal yoke—was, however, not really helped when the 'intellectuals' who fought for them devised, in reply, a theory just as wrong, namely, that the worker had every right to 'all products and profits, excepting those required to repair and replace capital.'

The principle of just distribution of product and profit must, in fact, be sought elsewhere. To begin with, Leo XIII's telling words must be borne in mind: 'The earth, even though apportioned among private owners, does not thereby cease to serve the needs of all.' As to the distribution of wealth—which is another way of saying that the earth is meant to serve the needs of all—if this is to be just, the good of the whole community must be served by it, the needs of every member satisfied, i.e., 'No class must exclude any other class from a share in the benefits.' 'Each person must receive his due share, and the distribution of created goods must be brought into conformity with the demands of the general good or social justice.'

'The distribution of wealth to-day is gravely defective,' Pius

XI remarks, 'as every sincere observer is aware, on account of the vast difference between the few who hold excessive wealth and the many who live in destitution.'

'THE EMANCIPATION OF THE PROLETARIAT.' It is at this point that we come to what Leo XIII declared must be the goal of all our efforts, namely, 'the emancipation of the proletariat.' And, says Pius XI, this must be more and more insisted on, because only too often this direction of Leo XIII has been allowed to fade from memory, and has been deliberately smothered in silence. Other Catholics have set it aside because they judged it to be impracticable. It is, on the contrary, the pope says insistently, a thing that can be accomplished and that must be accomplished.

It is true that a great deal has been done in the last forty years to better the lot of the workers in the more civilised countries. But as industrial developments have reached the new world, and the ancient countries of the Far East, the number of proletarians condemned to want has increased beyond measure. To these we must add the vast army of agricultural labourers, 'whose condition is depressed in the extreme,' and who have no hope at all of ever gaining a share in the land.

Despite all improvements, the fact remains that 'the material goods so abundantly produced in this industrial age' are still not justly distributed among the various classes. 'The immense number of proletarians, on the one hand, and the enormous wealth of the very rich on the other' are the proof of this. Something needs to be done, and 'every effort must be made' so that the wealthy are allowed to accumulate only their 'just share of the fruits of production' and that the workers receive 'an ample sufficiency.' The worker must be in such a position that it is possible for him to save, that the uncertainty which is his present lot may cease, and that he may be in a position to provide, should he die, for those he leaves behind him. Something needs to be done, and 'unless serious attempts be made,

with all energy and without delay to put these truths into practice,' a social revolution is inevitable.

THE JUST WAGE. But how can the worker save, except out of his wages? The question of wages still remains the important question that Leo XIII described. Pius XI now develops the teaching of *Rerum Novarum*. What he has to say can be summarised under six headings.

(1) It is not true to say that the wage contract is something always and everywhere unjust, and that a system of profit-sharing is the only system really fair to the worker. But, all the same, given modern conditions, the pope thinks it advisable that the wage system should be supplemented by some kind of partnership. This has been tried with success in many cases, the wage-earners and the officers of the business sharing in some way in the ownership, in the management or in the profits.

(2) This extremely serious business of the just wage cannot be solved, as some superficial people seem to think, by the simple application of some single principle. 'Many things have to be taken into account,' as Leo XIII has already said. It cannot, for example, be maintained that the just wage is a wage equal in value to the value of the work produced. The principle here is false.

(3) Labour—like property—has, besides its individual character, a social aspect also. Especially is this true of labour that is hired. In fact—and this is obvious—a man's labour cannot produce its fullness of fruit unless there be an organised social system, in which laws and customs protect the work; unless the different kinds of work co-operate; 'and—above all—unless intelligence, capital and labour combine in the common effort.' What the true value of human efficiency, what the adequate compensation it earns, can never be discovered if all this is left out of sight. Bearing in mind all that this twofold character of labour involves, certain extremely important consequences follow, which must be taken into account when wages are being fixed.

(4) Firstly, 'the wage paid to the working man must be sufficient for the support of himself and of his family.'<sup>1</sup> It is certainly right that other members of the family contribute, according to their means, towards the common maintenance. But 'to abuse the tender years of children, or the weakness of woman is an abomination.'<sup>2</sup> The true work for a mother is the work of her home. The state of things where a mother goes out to work because the father's pay is insufficient to keep the family is 'a most wicked abuse,'<sup>3</sup> a thing 'to be abolished at all costs.' The home in such cases is neglected and especially the mother's great function of training her little children. If present circumstances do not make it feasible to pay fathers of families 'such a wage that it meets, adequately, normal domestic needs . . . social justice demands that reforms be introduced without delay which will guarantee such a wage to every adult working man.'

(5) There needs also to be taken into account—in this matter of fixing wages—the business itself and those in charge of it. It would not, for example, be just to demand an exaggerated wage, which the business could not pay without ruin. Or again, the business, it may be, is perhaps run at little profit because there is a want of energy or of enterprise in the management, or because new methods are neglected. The loss which is due to causes of this sort does not justify a reduction of the workers' wages. It may, however, happen that a business declines because it has no choice but 'to sell its products at an unjustly low price.' In such a case the real culprits—should wages be reduced—are those who have laid the unjust burdens, or who have unjustly brought about the unproductive sales.

These are cases to be met by concerted action between workmen and employers, and this joint action the State should assist.

(6) Finally, in fixing rates of wages the good of the country as a whole needs to be taken into account. 'Opportunities for

<sup>1</sup> The pope refers here to what he has said in the encyclical, *Casti Connubii*: cf. p. 174, *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> *Nefas est*, in the Latin text.

<sup>3</sup> *Pessimus abusus* in the Latin; the English translation reads 'intolerable.'

work should be provided for every man able and willing to work. This depends in no small measure upon the level of wages. . . . All are aware that a rate of wages too low or too high causes unemployment. Unemployment . . . causes misery and temptation to the workers and endangers public order. . . . To lower or raise wages unduly, with a view to private advantage, and with no consideration for the common good, is therefore contrary to social justice, which demands that, so far as possible, by concerted plans and united wills, wages be so regulated as to offer to as many as possible opportunities of employment, and of securing for themselves suitable means of livelihood.'

Another point to which the pope draws attention is that there should be some kind of 'proportion between different wages' and also—what is closely connected with this—'proportion between the prices charged for the products of the various economic groups, agricultural, industrial and so forth.'

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SOCIAL ORDER.<sup>1</sup> All that Pius XI has had to say, so far, about a more just distribution of wealth only touches the question of the social order indirectly. Now the pope will speak of the needed reconstruction of the Social System, and he begins by saying that two things are especially called for, first a reform in the State, understanding State to mean the machinery by which a people is ruled and then a general improvement in conduct. Nine-tenths of this section is taken up with the first of these points.

It is not by any means because the pope thinks that salvation in social matters can come only from the State, that he declares that a refashioning of the State is an essential preliminary to the founding of a better social system. But things have come to such a pass 'on account of the evil of "individualism"' that, to-day, the State is overcharged with duties. There is now no power in the nation, between the individual citizen and the

<sup>1</sup> 'Social System' in the more usual English phraseology.

colossus called the State. All those lesser authorities, autonomous in their own subordinate sphere—that is to say, ‘all that highly developed social life which once flourished in a variety of associations’—have been damaged and all but ruined. Now, for the State to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller societies is an unjust usurpation and ‘a grave evil.’ It can never be a true aim of social activity to destroy any members of the social body. Social efficiency—and therefore the prosperity of the commonwealth—calls for a state of things in which there exists a graded hierarchy of associations, with the State indeed supreme, but ‘leaving to these smaller groups the settlement of business of minor importance.’

A first requisite for the common welfare is collaboration between the different professional groups, and to secure such harmony and co-operation is one of the State’s first duties.

Therefore it must be an aim of true social policy to re-establish such professional groups.<sup>1</sup>

If society to-day is suffering a strain that is chronic, this is because, at its base, there is an opposition of classes ‘divergent in aim . . . opposed to each other and . . . prone to strife.’ For, although labour is not just ‘like any piece of merchandise,’ and although the human worth of the worker must be recognised in the work, nevertheless, ‘as things are now, the wage-system does divide men into two classes or indeed camps.’ The labour market easily becomes a battle-ground, and this is ‘a serious disorder which is leading society to ruin.’

The remedy lies in a recognition that the real interests of both camps are identical, and in the organisation of all who work—in whatever capacity—in any particular trade, into a single professional corps. Men would then be divided, not as employers and workmen, but according as they followed, in one capacity or another, this or that particular trade or profession. These corporate groups would enjoy a certain power

<sup>1</sup> *Ordines* in the Latin text: ‘vocational groups’ in the English translation.

of self-government, employers and workmen collaborating, and in such corps or groups the predominating interest would be the welfare of the group as a whole and especially the promotion, to the maximum degree, of the group's own special and peculiar contribution to the common good of the State. As to the form of government within the group, the members would be as free to choose this as the citizens of a country are free to prefer either a kingdom or a republic. And it would remain a matter for each man's choice whether to become a member of this professional group or not.

So far the pope has spoken of the bodily structure of the State, as this needs to be. But to give life to the structure some vital principle is needed. What shall this be?

It cannot, says Pius XI, be the principle of unlimited free competition. For it is from 'this contaminated source' that, in fact, much of the misery of our present condition has flowed, 'the consequences of the practical application of these dangerous individualist ideas.' Still less can this vital principle be that of 'the economic dictatorship,' the successor in our own time to the old mischief of unrestricted competition.

The fact is that 'more lofty and noble principles must be sought, to wit Social Justice and Social Charity.' These alone will serve. Social Justice must interpenetrate the whole life of the peoples of the world and their institutions, and this so completely as to set up a social and juridical system that will, in a manner, give a character to the totality of economic life. Of this new social and juridical system, Social Charity will be the soul, and it will be the function of the State to foster and protect the system.

In the international field, too, it is co-operation that is needed; for the various nations are, economically, largely dependent on each other.

To the social body thus rebuilt, animated by true guiding principles, we may apply what St. Paul said of the mystical body of Christ: 'the whole body being compact and knit together throughout every joint of the system, part working in

harmony with part, the body deriveth its increase, unto the building up of itself in charity.' <sup>1</sup>

Pius XI ends this exposition of the new State, the State adapted to the task of perpetuating a better social order, with a review of such a state recently established, and with a criticism of it. This state is, of course, Italy as Fascism reorganised it; the criticism the pope has to make is that the State has gone too far in 'substituting itself for private initiative.' 'It is feared,' he goes on to say, 'that the new . . . organisation tends to have an excessively bureaucratic and political character, and that, notwithstanding the general advantage [which the pope has carefully noted], it serves particular political aims rather than the establishment of a better social order.'

To attain this last, most noble aim—the pope warns all of us—there is need, before all else, of the blessing of God and then of the co-operation of all men of good will. More would be accomplished in this direction if more use were made of Catholic principles. It is by no means the function of Catholic Action to play any part in political life, or in the life of such professional corporations. But Catholic Action will form public men according to the pattern of the essential Catholic principles. Thereby the Church will guide the work for the restoration of a better social order, for in this domain, the pope solemnly repeats, 'as in all others where moral questions arise, the Church cannot forget or neglect its God-given mandate to watch and to teach.'

This ends what the pope has to say about the reform of institutions—one of the two things chiefly necessary if the social order is to be reconstructed as it needs. He now passes to the second point—with which he deals much more briefly; it is a more familiar topic: the need, namely, for improvement in conduct.

What Pius XI has to say about this is set out with a half reference to present-day critics of the papal plan and an explicit reference to history. Such a social system as the pope now

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv, 16.

pleads should be reconstituted, did, in fact, once exist. It was not that system in perfection, but it corresponded very closely both with the ideals of social justice and charity and with the needs of the time. What prevented its mature perfection and what ultimately wrecked it was, very simply, sin. Excessive self-love and impatience of authority on the part of the generality, destroyed those fair hopes. History is thus, for Catholics, the closest evidence that 'all that We have taught about reconstructing and perfecting the social system will be of no avail without a reform of conduct.'

### III. THE ECONOMIC REGIME OF TO-DAY SURVEYED AND JUDGED

Since the date of Leo XIII's encyclical, the capitalist economic regime has spread everywhere. Its advantages, disadvantages, vices, now affect the whole human race.

And to-day, it is not only wealth that is accumulated but power to dominate the economic system despotically. It has now come to this that a few men—who are not the owners, but only the trustees and managers of the moneys invested—are thus masters of the whole economic world.

The source of their hold on that world is that, controlling money, they also control credit; it is this small group that decides who shall be given and who denied credit. They supply, 'so to speak, the life blood to the entire economic body.' They 'grasp in their hands the very soul of production, so that, against their will, no one can breathe.' 'This accumulation of power is the characteristic note of the modern economic order.' It is, also, 'a natural result of unrestricted competition.' For where this obtains, only the strongest survive; and the strongest, often enough, 'means those who fight most relentlessly, who pay least heed to the dictates of conscience.'

A threefold chronic struggle results from this accumulation of power by a few men. There is the endless struggle for supremacy in the economic field; there is the struggle to domi-

nate the State and use it as a tool; there is the struggle between the different states.

The final results then, in economic life, of the once-vaunted spirit of individualism are lamentable. The pope describes the contemporary scene: 'Unbridled ambition to dominate has succeeded the lust for profit; the whole economic regime has become hard, cruel and relentless to a ghastly degree.' The confusion in the over-burdened, ill-organised State has added to the evils and the State, 'which should be the supreme arbiter, ruling in kingly fashion far above all party contentions . . . has become instead a slave bound over to the service of human passion and greed.' In the relations of nation with nation, we can note two dangerous developments. On the one hand there is 'economic nationalism, or even economic imperialism; on the other hand, a no less noxious and detestable internationalism or international imperialism in financial affairs, which holds that where a man's fortune is, there is his country.'

#### IV. THE SOCIALISM OF TO-DAY SURVEYED AND JUDGED

Socialism, too, has undergone profound changes in the last forty years. It can no longer be termed a single system, defending 'certain definite and mutually coherent doctrines.' On the contrary, it has in the main split into two, often bitterly hostile, sections. But one thing both sections have in common, to wit, 'the anti-Christian basis which has always been characteristic of Socialism.'

One section has run headlong into Communism and openly, and by every means, it calls for the class war and the complete abolition of private property. Once the Communists succeed—and wherever they succeed—it is monstrous beyond belief how cruel and inhuman they show themselves to be.' It is likewise well known that they are militantly atheistic. The pope laments the heedlessness of so many before this terrible menace, and the apathy of states that do nothing to check that Communist propaganda which is always the beginning of the

trouble. Still worse, and meriting still more severe judgement, is the sloth <sup>1</sup> 'of those who neglect to remove or modify those social conditions which drive people to exasperation,' and who are thus preparing the way for the overthrow and ruin of the social order.

The other section keeps the name of Socialism and is much less radical. It condemns the use of force, would mitigate the class war and not abolish private ownership entirely. In a sense this section might seem to be tending towards the Christian tradition, and 'it cannot be denied that its opinions sometimes closely approach the just demands of Christian social reformers.' If this development, in Socialists of this type, continues (and Pius XI explains with some detail in what such development would consist) 'it may well come about that gradually these tenets of mitigated Socialism will no longer be different from the programme of those who seek to reform human society according to Christian principles.' The pope gives an example, saying: 'It is rightly contended that certain forms of property must be reserved to the State, since they carry with them a power too great to be left to private individuals without injury to the community at large.'

Not all Socialists, of course, are tending in this Christian direction, but even among those who are, the only possible propaganda, for a Catholic, is the Catholic truth whole and entire, without any connivance at error. And always there must be borne in mind that Socialism—even when it has mitigated its doctrine about the class war and private ownership—still remains a system which, by its very nature, is opposed to the Christian religion. Socialism, 'whether considered as a doctrine or as an historical fact, or as a movement, if it remains Socialism, cannot be brought into harmony with the dogmas of the Catholic Church, even after it has yielded to truth and justice on the points We have mentioned,' for it remains a system tha

<sup>1</sup> *Socordia* in the Latin text: 'foolhardiness' in the English translation (C.T.S., § 112).

'conceives human society in a way utterly alien from Christian truth.'

Socialism 'affirms that human society was instituted merely for the sake of material well-being. . . . Society, as Socialism conceives it, is . . . impossible and unthinkable without the use of obviously excessive compulsion; on the other hand, the theory fosters a false freedom for in the Socialist society there is no place given to true social authority,' i.e., the authority that descends from God alone, and which is not based on temporal and material well-being.

No pope has ever denied that there is 'a certain element of truth' in Socialism; 'it is nevertheless founded upon a doctrine of human society peculiarly its own, which is opposed to true Christianity.' Whence 'Religious Socialism, Christian Socialism, are expressions that imply a contradiction in terms. No one can be at the same time a sincere Catholic and a Socialist properly so-called.'

Pius XI next has a word of warning about that part of the vast Socialist movement which presents Socialism as a form of culture. 'Let all bear in mind that the parent of this cultural Socialism was Liberalism, and that its offspring will be Bolshevism.'

Socialism has won over many Catholics, says the pope, a few of them 'still preserving their true faith and good will.' Their excuse, often enough, is that 'the Church and those who profess to be attached to the Church, favour the rich and neglect the workers and have no care for them; they are therefore obliged in their own interest to join the Socialist ranks.'

To this the pope replies by a frank admission that 'there have been, and there are even now,' Catholics who are 'well-nigh unmindful of that sublime law of justice and of charity.' There are Catholics 'who out of greed for gain do not fear to oppress the workers,' and some who even try to use religion itself as a cloak for their injustice, and as a means to protect themselves against 'the manifestly just protestations of their

employees. We shall never desist from gravely censuring such conduct.' It is Catholics of this sort who are responsible when the Church, without deserving it, is reproached as the patron of the wealthy. The pope ends with an appeal to the worker whom the scandal of being oppressed by a bad Catholic employer has driven out, to return to the Church which, in the long run, is his best friend and his mother.

#### V. THE REAL ROOT OF THE SOCIAL DISORDER: THE ULTIMATE REMEDY

But the more we study this urgent matter of a Christian social reconstruction, the more does it become evident that, in the first place, there needs to be, in all, a renewal of the Christian spirit. What Leo XIII wrote in 1891 remains true, 'In no way can society be healed save by a return to Christian life and Christian institutions.'

The most terrible fact about the present state of things is that, for millions and millions, it sets up very serious obstacles to their salvation. The ruin of souls is what must move us most of all, and Pius XI proceeds, in analysing this thought, to yet another grim portrait of the characteristic type produced by the business world of to-day.

Those thousands of Catholic workers who have left the Church, says the pope, have left it very largely because the whole system of industry and business has long ago repudiated the law of Christ regarding such matters. And the captains of industry have gone their way regardless of Christ's law because their greed was too much for the restrictions which that law would lay upon it. The remains of original sin were too active in their souls.

It all began in sinful surrender to 'that unquenchable thirst for riches and temporal possessions' which, though at all times powerful to tempt man away from God, 'to-day lays more snares than ever for human weakness. For the uncertainty of economic life and especially of the economic regime demands

the keenest uninterrupted straining of energy on the part of those engaged therein; and as a result some have become so hardened against the stings of conscience as to hold all means good which enable them to increase their profits, and to safeguard against sudden changes of fortune the wealth amassed by great and assiduous efforts. Easy returns, which an unregulated market offers indiscriminately, attract to the buying and selling of goods very many whose one aim is to make rapid profits with the least labour. By their unchecked dealings, prices are raised and lowered, out of mere greed for gain, so frequently as to frustrate the most prudent calculations of manufacturers. The laws enacted for joint-stock companies with limited liability have given occasion to abominable abuses. For responsibility thus weakened makes little impression, as is evident, upon the conscience: very serious injustices and frauds are perpetrated beneath the shelter of the company's name; boards of directors, unmindful of their trust, betray the rights of those whose savings they administer. Finally, We must not omit to mention those crafty men who, absolutely indifferent as to whether their trade provides anything really useful, do not hesitate to stimulate human desires, and, when these have been aroused, make use of them for their own profit.'

Had the State so chosen, it could have done much to avert this mass of social mischief. But, too often, the State was itself dominated by the new rationalist theories about matters economic, theories which urged that morals had no place in the direction of economic life. And so it was that the State came to let men's inordinate desires have free rein.

The result was that 'a much greater number than ever before' began to pile up fortunes, committing the greatest crimes against others without scruple. 'Their apparent success, the extravagant display of wealth they were able to make, their derision of what they called the baseless scruple of others, and their crushing of more conscientious competitors—all these were features of their triumph, and reasons why they found imitators everywhere.

So it was that the captains of industry left the strait road of morality. What wonder if the workers did the same! Too often they were treated by their masters as mere tools, and the welfare of their souls was utterly ignored. How appalling, even yet, are the perils to which morals are exposed in the life of a factory! What a danger for the innocence of girls and women especially! If we add to this, disgraceful housing conditions, the obstacles these present to healthy family life, and the difficulties placed in the way of keeping holy the Sundays and feast days, the weakening of the Christian spirit among the workers is scarcely astonishing. The worker's one anxiety is to earn a living 'in any way he can.' Bodily labour, meant by God to be a means for man's exaltation, 'has been changed, in many instances, into an instrument of perversion; for from the factory dead matter goes out improved, whereas men are there corrupted and degraded.'

Now this general ruin of souls will necessarily bring to nought whatever is done to restore a true social order. And this ruin can be halted in one way only, in a renewal of obedience to the teaching of the Gospel. The perfect order—for which all of us now are longing—places, as its first and supreme purpose, God; all the rest, all the good things and values of this life, it regards simply as means by the right use of which we may attain to God. Unless men are prepared to recognise this, and to act accordingly, the new order will be faulty and imperfect. This is the only way of casting out that 'mere sordid selfishness, which is the disgrace and the great sin of the present age.' Man must learn anew 'to seek first the kingdom of God and His justice.'<sup>1</sup>

Man must also learn anew the value of charity and the necessity of charity. 'Charity, it is true, cannot take the place of justice unfairly withheld.' But when justice is done, there will still be ample scope for charity. For justice alone, powerful to remove obstacles that hinder reunion, cannot itself unite men's hearts. Brotherhood is the fruit of charity; and it is this union

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi, 33.

of minds and hearts that is 'the main principle of stability' everywhere.

The task of reconversion and spiritual renewal will be difficult in the extreme, says the pope, and he ends the encyclical with a bracing appeal to priests everywhere, and to those laymen whom the bishops 'will diligently seek, prudently select and suitably train' to be the apostles of their fellow-men. For 'undoubtedly the first and immediate apostles of the working-men must themselves be working-men, while the apostles of the industrial and commercial world should themselves be employers and merchants.' The priests, too, who are to be selected for this special duty need special qualities which the pope enumerates; and, for the spiritual formation of all, the pope most earnestly recommends the use of retreats.

No effort must be spared to avert from human society the grave misfortunes that hang over it. Least of all must we be sparing in prayer. 'With the help of God's grace, the destiny of the human family lies in our hands.'

### THE BROADCAST LA SOLLENITA DELLA PENTECOSTE

*This is the latest authoritative comment made by a pope on the Rerum Novarum of Leo XIII, and it was given to the world at the official golden jubilee celebration of that encyclical.<sup>1</sup> Short though it be, no one who studies it will deny that it is, in some respects, the most pregnant utterance of the Holy See in all those fifty years. For in this address Pius XII, the present pope, develops constructively, in a very bold way, the traditional teaching about the limitations on the use of the right of ownership, and he opens out an indefinitely wide field for new*

<sup>1</sup> On Whit Sunday (1 June 1941): since this summary was made, an English translation has been published by the Catholic Truth Society under the title *Wealth, Work and Freedom*. The translation followed here is that in the *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, which has been carefully compared with the Italian text in the same official journal.

*thought by his enunciation of the principle of man's natural right to the use of material goods. The bold teaching of this letter must play a part in all the coming reconstruction of civilisation. It is a doctrine only to be disregarded at the peril of Europe's future—so near are we now to chaos. Once more the pope insists that the social problem is a moral problem and, let this be noted for a most significant detail, his last message to Catholics is to cultivate and to foster devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.*

*Here, in brief analysis, are the contents of the address.*

# I. HOW THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN SOCIAL QUESTIONS IS PARAMOUNT.

## II. MAN'S NATURAL RIGHT TO THE USE OF MATERIAL GOODS THE BASIS OF HIS NECESSARY FREEDOM.

## III. MAN'S RIGHT TO WORK AS THE MEANS TO FULFIL HIS DUTY TO LIVE.

## IV. PRIVATE PROPERTY'S PRIMARY FUNCTION, viz., to secure to the father of a family the freedom needed for his family duties.

### I. HOW THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN THE SOCIAL QUESTION IS PARAMOUNT

POPE PIUS XII, after references to the war and to the day's feast, opens his subject by saying that this anniversary of Leo XIII's 'epoch-making . . . encyclical *Rerum Novarum*' is one which 'deserves to be written on the Church's calendar in letters of gold.'

*Rerum Novarum* was written because Leo XIII was 'profoundly convinced that the Church has not only the right but the duty to make an authoritative pronouncement on the social question,' and the encyclical was addressed to all the world. Pius XII—repeating here, he says it explicitly, what Pius XI

had said in *Quadragesimo Anno*—notes how Leo XIII's great message leaves entirely aside all discussion of the particular ways and means by which, in different places, the principles he expounds are to be put into practice. Leo XIII, says Pius XII, 'had no intention of laying down guiding principles [concerning] the purely practical, We might say technical, side of the social structure.' And the reason for this abstention is simple enough: 'He was well aware of the fact . . . that the Church does not claim such a mission.'

The pope, then, does not deny to the multitude of technical specialists the important function in social reform which belongs to them. Nor does he deny the rights of the State in the matter. There is, he says, 'a wide field of action where public authority comes in with its integrating and co-ordinating activity.' The State itself 'has the important duty of forestalling the dislocation of economic balance arising from the multiplicity, and the conflicts, of the competing selfish interests, individual and collective.'

If the popes insist that the role of the Church in this grave matter of reshaping the social order or system is paramount, this is not, then, because they belittle the important role of the technicians or of the State. The field for the Church's intervention, says Pius XII, is 'that side of the social order where it meets and enters into contact with the sphere of morals.' And with regard to this intervention the pope now, with great explicitness, makes three declarations.

First, 'It is [within] the indisputable competence of the Church, on that side of the social order where it so meets and enters into contact with the sphere of morals, to decide whether the bases of a given social organisation are in accord with the unchangeable order which God our Creator and Redeemer has shown us through the natural law and revelation.

Secondly, 'The natural law and revelation': Leo XIII has already appealed to these as the 'twofold manifestation' of the divine plan. And rightly so, says Pius XII, 'for the dictates of the natural law and those of revelation stream forth, in a dif-

ferent manner . . . from the same divine source.' And so the Church takes note of both, for 'the Church [is] the guardian of the supernatural Christian order in which Nature and Grace converge' and upon her is laid the task of 'forming consciences, of forming also the consciences <sup>1</sup> of those who are called upon to find a solution of the problems and duties imposed by social life.' All depends, in fact—that is to say, 'the good or ill of souls'—upon 'the form given to society, whether this conforms or not to the Divine Law: that is to say, it depends on this conformation whether men, all called to live by the grace of Christ a new life, do actually, in the detailed stress of their lives, breathe a healthy vivifying atmosphere of truth and moral virtue or else the disease-laden and often fatal air of error and corruption.'

Finally, 'How, then, could the Church, the loving mother solicitous for her children, remain an indifferent onlooker at their danger? How could she remain silent, or feign not to see or to take into account social conditions which, willingly or not, make difficult or practically impossible a Christian life in keeping with the precepts of the Divine Lawgiver?'

Here, then, is the primary source of the anxiety of the popes, the responsibility which drove Leo XIII fifty years ago to warn the world, and the Christian conscience, against the dangerous mistakes of the Socialist theories and against 'the fatal consequences of economic liberalism.' What these last were, Pius XII describes in a single blasting phrase, 'economic liberalism, so often unaware, or forgetful, or contemptuous of social duties.'

Nor did Leo's beneficent action halt at this, says his successor. He set out with a 'wonderful precision the principles needed if the material and spiritual lot of the workers were to be gradually, and peacefully improved.'

The pope speaks next of the fruits of Leo XIII's letter. By now, he says, 'the norms [of *Rerum Novarum*] have become

<sup>1</sup> This repetition of the phrase is in the original and in the French translation, but is missing from the English translation as published in the Catholic press.

almost the common heritage of all men.' One great change especially can be noted, namely in the attitude of states generally to the social question. This has changed radically since the publication of *Rerum Novarum* and it has changed in the sense of *Rerum Novarum*. Leo XIII, as was noted at the time,<sup>1</sup> went flatly in the face of all the academic political economists of the day when he urged that the State had a duty to intervene in these matters of Capital and Labour. Now, all states consider such intervention a normal part of public business.

Pius XI, in *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), reviewed the changes wrought in the economic and social life of the world during the intervening years since *Rerum Novarum* (1891), and supplemented accordingly the teaching of Leo XIII. Pius XII now takes into account the ten years since *Quadragesimo Anno*, 'ten years . . . no less fraught with surprises [which] have finally poured their dark and turbulent waters into the sea of a war whence unpredictable storms may break up our economy and society.' What new problems calling for the care of the Church the future holds, no man can say. But, with his knowledge of the past few years, the pope feels that he ought, 'on three fundamental values of social and economic life,' to set forth 'some further directive moral principles.' These three fundamental values are the use of material goods; labour; the family.

## II. MAN'S NATURAL RIGHT TO THE USE OF MATERIAL GOODS THE BASIS OF HIS NECESSARY FREEDOM

The basic idea in this matter, as Pius XII has already stated,<sup>2</sup> is 'the undeniable need that the goods which were created by God for all men, should flow equally to all, according to the principles of justice and of charity.'

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Encyclical and the Economists*, by Herbert Lucas, S.J., in *The Month*, July 1891: a really scholarly critique well worth disinterring.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. in the encyclical *Sertum Laetitiae* (1 November 1939) to the bishops of the U.S.A. from which the pope now quotes: this encyclical is published by the Catholic Truth Society, under the title *True and False Prosperity*.

Every man, just because he is a man, that is to say because he is 'a living being gifted with reason,' has 'the right to make use of the material goods of the earth': he has the right 'from nature' and it is a fundamental right.

The details of the exercise of this right—e.g., what man is to possess these particular goods, how any man is to become the possessor, or occupier, of any particular goods—are to be regulated (i) by the will of men and (ii) by the laws of the different states.

Nevertheless 'this individual right cannot in any way be suppressed, not even by other clear and undisputed rights over material goods.'

The pope gives examples to illustrate his meaning. There is the right of private property, an institution which is natural and derives from God; there is 'the reciprocal commerce of goods by interchange and gift'; there is 'the functioning of the State as a control' over private property and over commerce. Property, commerce and the State have rights, undoubtedly, and rights which derive from the natural order. All three of these institutions and their rights are natural, and therefore necessary. Yet all three remain 'subordinated to the natural purpose of material goods.' This natural system—i.e., of private property, commerce and the controlling state—'nevertheless cannot emancipate itself from the first and fundamental right which concedes to all men the use of material goods.' The system ought, in fact, to serve to make this fundamental right more of a reality. And it is only if this purpose is kept in mind that the institution of private property and the use of material goods will bring fruitful peace and living stability to society. If this purpose be left out of account we cannot hope to avoid those 'precarious conditions which breed struggles and jealousy, conditions which are at the mercy of the blind interplay of violence and weakness.'

'The native right to the use of material goods,'<sup>1</sup> says Pius XII, in a striking new phrase, 'offers man a secure material

<sup>1</sup> *Il diritto originario sull' uso dei beni materiali*, in the Italian original.

basis that is of the highest importance, for it is on this basis that he rises to the fulfilment of his moral duties.'

This natural right is bound up with man's worth as a human person, i.e., as a being possessed of its own power of reasoning, a being whose vital principle is its own spiritual, immortal soul: and the laws of the several states are the means by which the natural right finds expression and the material security is established.

Whatever, then, safeguards this 'native right to the use of material goods,' safeguards man's worth as a human person, and helps him to accept and to fulfil 'in due freedom that sum of stable duties and decisions for which he is directly responsible to his Creator,' to fulfil man's 'entirely personal duty of preserving and ordering to perfection his material and spiritual life, so as to attain the religious and moral purpose which God has assigned to all men, and [which] God has given them as the supreme law, obliging always and everywhere before all other duties.'

And here the State begins to play its part—for to safeguard rights is one of the purposes for which states exist, and 'To safeguard the inviolable sphere of the rights of the human person, and to facilitate the fulfilment of his duties, should be the essential office of every public authority. Is not this, indeed, the genuine meaning<sup>1</sup> of that "common good" which the State is called upon to promote?'

'Care for the common good' cannot imply any power in the State to interfere with the development of that personal individual activity of man just described. The State cannot, for example, 'decide on the beginning or the ending<sup>2</sup> of human life; the State cannot determine at will the manner of [human life's] physical, spiritual, religious and moral movements in opposition to the personal duties or rights of man; [nor can the State] for this purpose, abolish, or deprive of efficacy, man's natural right to material goods.'

<sup>1</sup> Pius XII has already, in *Summi Pontificatus*, made clear this genuine concept is, and how it is to be determined: cf. *supra*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>2</sup> 'Except,' says the pope, 'in the case of lawful punishment.'

If we were to allow such usurpations, says Pius XII, and allow them in the very name of the State's duty to care for the common good, we should strip this phrase of all meaning, and fall into the error of supposing that the purpose for which man exists is society, 'that society is an end in itself, that man has no other life awaiting him beyond the life which ends here below.'

The State, because its business is 'the common good,' must then respect individual rights and the essentially personal activity of which the pope has been speaking. And the whole organisation of the State 'has no other end than to secure, without interruption, the material conditions in which the individual life of its citizens will be fully developed.' It is the State where 'the personal right of all to the use of worldly goods' is most of a reality which is the truly rich state, rich even in the economical sense. For a people's 'economic riches . . . do not properly consist in the abundance of goods measured according to a purely and solely material calculation of their worth, but in the fact that such abundance represents and offers, really and effectively, the material basis sufficient for the proper personal development of its members.'

In any judgement whether a country is rich or poor, the first thing to be considered is how far the State has succeeded in providing this material basis, how far the people really share the national wealth. It is 'such distribution effected genuinely and permanently' that makes a people 'economically sound,' and not any mere 'abundance of goods to dispose of.' Statesmen who understand this truth and are guided by it will not be for ever exigent of the goods and blood of the citizens, 'but will give them the fruits of peace and general well-being.'

### III. MAN'S RIGHT TO WORK AS THE MEANS TO FULFIL HIS DUTY TO LIVE

The connection between this second 'fundamental value Labour' and the first value, that 'use of material goods' just discussed, is very close.

Pius XII, with a reference to *Rerum Novarum*, repeats Leo XIII's teaching that human labour is, in its essence (1) a personal thing and (2) a necessary thing: it is personal, 'because achieved through man's particular forces'; it is necessary, 'because without it we cannot procure what is indispensable to life.' And it is a man's 'natural, grave, individual duty' to maintain life. So, to the duty to labour imposed on man by his nature there 'corresponds the natural right of each individual to make of labour the means to provide for his own life and that of his children.' So profoundly is Nature's empire organised 'for the preservation of man.'

We must now note that this particular duty of working, and the corresponding right to work, do not come to man, to the individual man, from any act on the part of society. It is not the State, but Nature, that imposes this duty and confers this right. Man is not, in this respect, 'nothing more than a mere slave or official of the community.'

Therefore, 'the duty and the right to organise the people's labour belongs, above all, to the people immediately interested, to the employers and the workers.' The State only comes in where these neglect their duty, or where special crises put it beyond their power to do their duty, or else in order to secure that the common good of the nation is not overlooked in the division and distribution of the work.

But—and here the pope returns to his earlier point about the rights of personality—'every legitimate and beneficial interference of the State in the field of labour should be such as to safeguard and respect its personal character.' The State will never be in any danger of overlooking this fact (i.e., the fact that labour is a personal thing) so long as it does not 'abolish or render impossible the exercise of other rights and duties equally personal.' The pope gives, as examples of these, 'the right to give God His due worship; the right to marry; the rights of husband and wife, of father and mother to lead their married domestic life; the right to a reasonable liberty in the choice of a state of life and of the fulfilment of a true vocation.'

## IV. PRIVATE PROPERTY'S PRIMARY FUNCTION

The right or institution of Private Property is, so *Rerum Novarum* teaches, and Pius XII recalls this, bound up with the existence of human society and true civilisation; and it is so bound up by the very nature of things. 'In a very special manner [it is bound up] with the existence and development of the family.'

It is Private Property, in fact, which should 'secure for the father of a family the healthy liberty he needs in order to fulfil the duties assigned to him by the Creator regarding the physical, spiritual and religious welfare of the family.' And 'in the family the nation finds the natural roots of its greatness and power.'

But, 'if Private Property is to conduce to the good of the family, all public regulations and state property laws' must make possible, must preserve and must continually perfect, this primary function<sup>1</sup> of Private Property, namely that it secures for the fathers of families the liberty just described. The 'civil progress' which, disregarding this primary function of private property, interfered so extensively with the right to own as to make it no more than a name, and which thus, in practice, took away from the family and its head their freedom to move towards the ideal of family life appointed by God, such 'civil progress,' no matter how vaunted, would be a thing that went contrary to nature.

The most important form of Private Property—if we are considering it as an aid to family life—is land. This, says Pius XII, *Rerum Novarum* has already taught us, and 'in the spirit of *Rerum Novarum*,' the pope goes on to say, 'as a rule, only that stability which is rooted in one's own holding makes of the family the vital and most perfect cell of society.' There is much talk to-day of 'living space,' says Pius XII: here is the

<sup>1</sup> 'A function which, in the natural order, is in certain respects superior to all others.'

'living space' <sup>1</sup> of the family. Surely, before all else, should not statesmen think of *this* 'living space,' and set themselves to abolish all those restrictions which make even the idea of possessing a holding in land no more than an idle dream?

There still remain, upon this planet, thousands of square miles 'now abandoned to wild natural vegetation, and well suited to cultivation by man to satisfy his needs.' Emigration is inevitable, and now comes the moment when 'the right of the family to a living space' comes into operation. If emigration results in families realising their rights to a 'living space,' it really attains its natural purpose, to wit the more favourable distribution of men on the earth's surface. If now, on both sides, that is on the part of 'those who agree to leave their native land and those who agree to admit new-comers,' there is a desire 'to sweep away all hindrances to the birth and development of real confidence between the country of Emigration and the country of Immigration,' the movement will benefit all concerned: 'the families will acquire a holding that will be for them a fatherland in the true sense of the word; the thickly populated countries will be relieved, and their peoples will gain new friends in foreign countries; the states which receive the emigrants will be enriched by new, industrious citizens.'

'These are the principles, conceptions and rules through which We should like to co-operate, as from now on, in the future organisation of that new order, for the birth of which . . . the world is waiting and wishing . . .' says Pius XII, and he ends with an eloquent appeal to all to take up the social apostolate in the spirit of Leo XIII, and not to be discouraged either by the failures of the past, or by the weaknesses they discern in the movement to-day. And Pius XII repeats the eternal truth that this is a moral problem, only to be solved, ultimately, by the aid of God's grace, and therefore by workers united to God in prayer. And it is with an invocation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus that the address ends.

<sup>1</sup> We may note that the official German translation reads 'Lebensraum'!

## CHAPTER IX

### THE INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM: VARIOUS DECLARATIONS ABOUT MODERN WARS, THEIR CAUSES, AND WHAT ALONE CAN PREVENT THEM, BY THE POPES LEO XIII, BENEDICT XV, PIUS XI AND PIUS XII.

1889-1941

#### THE ADDRESS NOSTIS ERROREM

*Here is the most topical of all social problems, the International Problem. In this chapter there is gathered a somewhat miscellaneous selection of papal declarations—encyclicals, papal letters to individuals, addresses to the cardinals and others, diplomatic correspondence—which yet serve to show the continuity of the papal direction through fifty years of kindly, constant, patient—and disinterested—admonition. How little regard the European rulers paid to the well-founded warnings—warnings based on the nature of things, as reason, the experience of centuries, and God's revelation declare that nature—all the world can tell to-day. In candour we ought to recall those two striking refusals of the papal aid for which more than one great power must share the responsibility, namely the exclusion of the pope from the Peace Conferences at The Hague in the years before 1914, and the pledge of England and France to Italy in 1915 that he would be excluded from the conference that should decide the re-settlement of the world after the world war then in progress.*

*The address of Leo XIII, an extract from which is here translated, was made to the College of Cardinals 11 February 1889.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> The text and a French translation are printed in *La Patrie et la Paix*, a collection of papal declarations on Peace, Patriotism and War, edited with

*Leo XIII has been speaking of the friendly relations, recently renewed, between the Holy See and Russia. It is the pope's duty, he has been saying, to do all he can to bring into the Church those as yet outside her fold, to offer them this harbour and refuge from the storms. He then continues:*

THERE is yet another matter which invites our attention, a matter which to-day has a special urgency. To-day, more than ever, peace is the thing universally desired, by all the peoples of the world. The very words, peace, tranquillity, rest, are on everyone's lips. The rulers of every state in Europe call all mankind to witness that their sole desire, their one endeavour, is to protect the beneficent fruits of peace; and their subjects, citizens of all classes, support them in this, for day by day it becomes ever more evident what a loathing the people have for war. A more natural loathing cannot be conceived. For while to make war can at times be necessary, warfare yet never fails to produce an immense mass of disaster. And how much more disastrous will not warfare in modern times prove to be, with the huge increase in the size of the armies, the advance in all the military sciences, and the development in machinery designed for killing? The more often that Our thoughts turn to this subject, the more do We burn with love for all these Christian peoples, and for their sake We cannot fail to note, with great anxiety of spirit, and to dread, the terror which is threatening. Nothing is so important to-day as to ward off from Europe the danger of war. So true is this, that whatever is done for this purpose must be judged as a work done for the public safety.

Nevertheless, only to desire that public affairs remain calm and peaceful will achieve little; nor will the mere resolve to defend peace be enough. Huge armies, likewise, and a great store of weapons of war—potent as these sometimes are to restrain a foe's hostile intent—have yet no power to produce and secure any stable calm. On the contrary, armaments gathered as a

kind of threat are more likely to increase jealousy and suspicion than to allay them. These armaments trouble the minds of all with anxious foreboding of what is to come, and there is this especial misfortune about them that they lay such burdens on the population that often, seemingly, war itself might be more bearable.

Therefore we need to look for stronger foundations than these, upon which to build up peace, foundations that are closer to the nature of things. There is nothing at variance with nature in the idea that it is lawful to use force in defence of one's rights. What nature does not tolerate is that force should be held to beget rights.<sup>1</sup> Since peace is the tranquillity that comes from order, it follows that, for States as for individuals, concord chiefly rests upon justice and charity.

It is clear to all what are the strongest and unchangeable links that bind men in concord, namely, not to do violence to any man, to respect the rights of others as something holy, to foster mutual trust and good will; and in these there is such a strength as is incompatible with even the first sentiments of enmity or jealous rivalry.

Now it is the Church which God has commanded to be the parent and the guardian of these two virtues. And so it is that the Church has never held any duty more holy—nor ever will—than this of preserving, of promoting, and of defending the laws of justice and charity. With this duty in her mind, the Church has made her way through all the countries of the world. No one will deny that she led the barbarian peoples, from their brutal pre-occupation with war, to civilisation and the ways of peace by infusing into their minds her own love of justice. To all alike, to the needy and to the powerful, to subjects and to rulers, the Church proposes this one command, to observe justice and never to strive with anyone for a cause which is unjust. . . .

Mindful, and rightfully, of the laws and example of her

<sup>1</sup> Or 'to bring rights into existence': the Latin text of this important sentence is as follows: *sed illud natura non partitur, vim esse iuris efficientem causam-*

divine founder, who willed to be called the King of Peace . . . the Church would see all men in enjoyment of this beautiful gift, and she does not cease, with many prayers, to beseech God to preserve the lives and fortunes of men from the terrible risks of war. And so long as the need shall persist, and opportunity allow, the Church will not undertake any work more willingly than to use what power she possesses to restore harmony among men and bring peace to states. .

It is such reasons and causes that move Us, Venerable Brothers—the most weighty, the holiest reasons of all—in all our thoughts about this matter. Whatever the chances of time may have in store, however men may judge or act, it is by these standards that all Our action will be guided; and from these standards We shall assuredly not turn. Nor in the last resort, if we are not allowed in any other way to work for the cause of peace, shall anyone prevent Our persevering prayer to Him who is able to move the wills of men as He chooses. To Him We make this prayer, that Europe may rest, in true quiet, upon these same true and stable bases, with all fear of war utterly cast out, and, by God's goodness, a just order in public affairs set up once more.<sup>1</sup>

### THE ENCYCLICAL PERVENUTI

*This is a short, but very relevant, extract from one of the last utterances of Leo XIII, the letter that ushered in the jubilee*

<sup>1</sup> A 'progressive' politician has recently said of the present pope's Five Peace Points that they are no more than pious platitudes. And, far too often, to the world's loss, contemporaries have treated the Holy See's warnings and suggestions with a similar hostile superficiality. Popular memory recalls well enough the great wars that broke out, while it forgets the long critical periods when war was for years on the point of breaking out, and averted not by any zeal for peace on the part of rulers but by their simple fear that they were not yet so well prepared as the other side. This address of Leo XIII was delivered during just such a period of crisis. It was clothed in language such that no power could feel the speech was a partisan attack, but despite its general terms the message was clear to those aware of the realities of the contemporary situation, and it was pre-eminently realist and actual. 'The year 1887,' said a great Austrian paper, the *Neue Freie Presse*, in its New Year issue for 1888, 'began with the most serious apprehension of imminent war, and it closes with similar anxieties. . . . The pulse of the century grows

year of his pontificate. It is dated March 19, 1902, and bears the title *Pervenuti All'Anno Vicesimoquinto*. The pope was then 92. He died sixteen months later. The text here translated can be found in *La Patrie et la Paix*, p. 31 (French text), p. 302 (Italian).

. . . Once Christian principles were repudiated—those principles which are so practically powerful to seal the brotherhood of man and to unite the whole human race into one great family—little by little there began to prevail in international affairs a system of jealous self-sufficiency. The effect of this has been that the nations now look at each other, if not always with hatred, certainly with the mistrust of rivals at any rate.

Here is the reason why, in their various undertakings, the nations have been easily tempted to forget the high principles of morality and justice and of the protection of the weak and oppressed. Indeed, their one anxiety, in their keenness to pile up endlessly the national wealth, has been for the chance to succeed, and the profit of success, and the good fortune of the *fait accompli*; and their one certainty in all this is that no one, later on, will, in the name of right and justice, question what they have achieved. Fatal principles indeed are these, and they have consecrated material force and made it the world's supreme law. Thence has come the progressive and unbridled increase in armaments of war, and thence, too, that armed peace which in many respects is like to the most disastrous effects of war itself. . . .<sup>1</sup>

feverish. The political and economic atmosphere has become dull and oppressive. What we are now experiencing is comparable to the creaking of the walls in an unsound house which usually precedes a catastrophe.' And Bismarck, about this same time, said that he personally did not expect war within three years. He hoped it would not take place before 1892, by which date the Powers 'would have attained their maximum fighting strength.' For this, and much else which is a valuable (because unintentional) corroboration, not only of the popes' fears but of their repeated statements that rulers who divorce their political activity from Christian principles are a menace to mankind, see J. A. SPENDER, *Fifty Years of Europe*, 2nd ed., 1936, from which book (p. 112) the above quotations are taken.

<sup>1</sup> As a pendant to Pope Leo's linking up the repudiation of Catholic principles with the chronic international crisis we may cite Spender's words

## THE PEACE NOTE DÈS LE DÉBUT

*The Peace Note of Benedict XV has a place apart in a collection of papal documents such as these. For it is a diplomatic note, and not a doctrinal message. Although the pope's ultimate objective—as always—is the promotion of what is good, the restoration of good will and charity, what he is here actually proposing is not some specifically religious activity but a political arrangement.*

*It is not often that documents are published which illustrate the working of contemporary papal diplomacy. When the veil is momentarily lifted, as here, we are given a glimpse how the vast system of nuncios and other diplomatic agents, over which the Cardinal Secretary of State presides, can work through the machinery of diplomacy for the practical attainment of those ideals which the popes set forth in their encyclicals.*

*The two letters from the Cardinal Secretary of State from which, following the Peace Note, extracts are given, have this interest that they propose a practical solution for the chronic*

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about the classically successful statesman of that generation (1862-1890), Bismarck. 'Bismarck, according to the standard of the time, was a great patriot and a disinterested lover of his country . . . [For Germany] he considers all things lawful—open alliances, secret entanglements, professions of friendship, stabs in the back, fomenting of quarrels in which Germany should be spectator and *tertius gaudens* . . . the hypocrites were those who "pretended to judge him by the standards of domestic morality" (op. cit., p. 126). Like Napoleon he deems it an absurdity to suppose that the morality of statecraft can be that of the domestic hearth. German interests are enough for him, and if these require that other nations should be poisoned against each other or incited to quarrel, he will instil the poison and foment the quarrels' (ibid., p. 98).

Nor, of course, was Bismarck unique. This same experienced observer of the European scene—from a point of view far enough removed from that of the popes, be it remembered—can say of the leading actors, fifteen years after Bismarck's disappearance into the wings, 'Fraud, cunning, duplicity are words which rise to the lips of the unsophisticated reader as he studies the documents of these times, and notes the avowals of their motives and intentions which the principal actors on this scene make without shame to one another. But these were words of little meaning to the practitioners of power politics in 1905' (ibid., p. 254).

*problem of ever-threatening general warfare. The encyclicals never step outside the realm of principle and theory. But here is evidence that the papacy can, if it be invited, produce practical schemes also. The pope as pope can, and must indeed, insist where principles are concerned. When it is a matter of practical schemes, however, he can do no more than offer his own to the consideration of the parties concerned. Here is one such scheme: and no party in the dispute would even consider it! The letter to the Archbishop of Sens is also practical evidence of something else, namely that both the Allies and the Central Empires thought that the Peace Proposals favoured the other side—a pretty good proof of their genuine neutrality.*

*No one will read these letters without being struck by the sane, balanced, equitable outlook of the power whence they came. At a time when, yet once again, the pope is striving to remain neutral in order not to shut off any possibility of his doing good to all, it is well to recall these proofs of how wise and disinterested was the papal neutrality and intervention during the last war. It is interesting to recall, also, that to deliver the Peace Note of 1917 to the German Emperor William II, was the first task of the then newly appointed nuncio to Munich, Mgr Eugenio Pacelli, who to-day is Pius XII.*

*The letter of the then Cardinal Secretary of State to the English Prime Minister, it should be added, accompanied the transmission to the English Government of the German and Austrian replies to the pope's Peace Note. That note is dated 1 August 1917—the feast of St. Peter-in-chains—and is known by its opening words *Dès le Début*. The translation here given, save for an occasional correction, is that published in *The Pope and the People*. The note is too brief—as well as too important—not to be printed in full.*

Since the beginning of Our Pontificate, amid the horrors of the terrible war let loose on Europe, We have kept in mind three things above all: to maintain perfect impartiality towards all the belligerents, as becomes him who is the common fa-

ther and who loves with equal affection all his children; to strive constantly to do to all the greatest possible good, without exception of persons, without distinction of nationality or religion, as is enjoined upon Us both by the Universal Law of charity and by the supreme spiritual charge confided to Us by Christ; finally, as Our pacifying mission equally requires, to omit nothing, as far as might be in Our power, that could help to hasten the end of this calamity, by essaying to bring the people and their Leaders to more moderate counsels and to the serene deliberations of peace—a peace ‘just and lasting.’

Whoever has followed Our work during the three sad years just elapsed has been able easily to recognise that, if We have been ever-faithful to Our resolve of absolute impartiality and to Our beneficent action, We have never ceased to exhort the belligerent peoples and Governments to become brothers once more, even though all that We have done to achieve this most noble aim has not been made public.

Towards the end of the first year of war We addressed to the nations in conflict the liveliest exhortations, and pointed out, moreover, the path by following which a peace, stable and honourable for all, might be attained. Unfortunately Our appeal was not heeded; and the war went on desperately, with all its horrors, for another two years; it became still more cruel, and spread, on land, on sea—nay, in the very air; upon defenceless cities, quiet villages, and their innocent inhabitants, desolation and death were seen to fall. And now none can imagine how the sufferings of all would be increased and intensified were yet other months, or, still worse, other years, added to this bloody triennium. Shall, then, the civilised world be nought but a field of death? And shall Europe, so glorious and flourishing, rush, as though driven by universal madness, towards the abyss, and lend her hand to her own suicide?

In a situation so fraught with anguish, in the presence of so grave a peril, We, who have no special political aim, who heed neither the suggestions nor the interests of either of the bellig-

erent parties, but are impelled solely by the feeling of Our supreme duty as the common father of the peoples, by the prayers of Our children, who implore from us intervention, and Our word of peace, by the very voice of humanity and of reason, We raise again a cry for peace, and renew a pressing appeal to those in whose hands lie the destinies of nations. But in order no longer to confine Ourselves to general terms, such as were counselled by circumstances in the past, We desire now to come down to more concrete and practical proposals, and to invite the Governments of the belligerent peoples to bring themselves to agree upon the following points, which seem as though they ought to be the bases of a just and lasting peace, leaving to their charge the completion and the more precise definition of those points.

#### SEVEN SUGGESTED BASES FOR NEGOTIATION

First, the fundamental point should be that the moral force of right should replace the material force of arms.

(2) Whence a just agreement between all for the simultaneous and reciprocal diminution of armaments, according to rules and guarantees to be established, to the extent necessary and sufficient for the maintenance of public order in each State; then (3) in the place of armies, the establishment of arbitration with its exalted pacifying functions, on lines to be concerted and with sanctions to be settled against any State that should refuse either to submit international questions to arbitration or to accept its awards.

(4) The supremacy of right once established in this way, let every obstacle be removed from the channels of communication between peoples, by ensuring, under rules likewise to be laid down, the true freedom and common enjoyment of the seas. This would, on the one hand, remove manifold causes of conflict, and would open, on the other, fresh sources of prosperity and progress to all.

(5) As to the reparation of damage and to the costs of

war, We see no way to solve the question save by laying down as a general principle, complete and reciprocal condonation, which would, moreover, be justified by the immense benefits that would accrue from disarmament; all the more, since the continuation of such carnage solely for economic reasons would be incomprehensible. If, in certain cases, there exist, nevertheless, special reasons *that tell in a contrary sense*,<sup>1</sup> let these be weighed with justice and equity.

(6) But these pacific agreements, with the immense advantages they entail, are impossible without the reciprocal restitution of territories now occupied; consequently on the part of Germany the complete evacuation of Belgium, with a guarantee of her full political, military, and economic independence as regards all Powers whatsoever; likewise the evacuation of French territory. On the part of the other belligerent parties, a similar restitution of the German colonies.

(7) With regard to territorial questions, as for example those at issue between Italy and Austria, and between Germany and France, there is room to hope that in consideration of the immense advantages of a lasting peace with disarmament, the parties in conflict will be glad to <sup>2</sup> examine them in a conciliatory spirit, taking account, in the measure of what is just and possible, in the way We have mentioned on other occasions, of the aspirations of the peoples and, as opportunity offers, co-ordinating particular interests with the general weal of the great human society.

The same spirit of equity and justice ought to direct the study of the other territorial and political questions, notably those relating to Armenia, the Balkan States, and to the territories forming part of the ancient Kingdom of Poland, to which, in particular, its noble historical traditions and the sufferings endured, especially during the present war, ought justly to assure the sympathies of the nations.

<sup>1</sup> The phrase in italics is omitted in the English version given in *The Pope and the People*, p. 220.

<sup>2</sup> *Voudront les examiner.*

Such are the principal bases upon which We believe the future reorganisation of peoples should be founded. They are of such a nature as to render impossible the return of similar conflicts, and such as to prepare the solution of the economic question, so important for the future and the material welfare of all the belligerent States. Therefore, in laying them before you, who guide at this tragic hour the destinies of the belligerent nations, We are inspired by the pleasing hope of seeing them accepted, and thus of seeing ended at the earliest moment the terrible struggle that appears increasingly a useless massacre. Everyone recognises, moreover, that, on the one side and on the other, the honour of arms is safe. Lend, therefore, your ear to Our prayer, accept the fatherly invitation that We address to you in the name of the Divine Redeemer, the Prince of Peace. Think of your very heavy responsibility before God and men; upon your resolves depend the repose and the joy of innumerable families, the lives of thousands of young men, in a word, the happiness of the peoples to whom it is your absolute duty to assure these boons. May the Lord inspire in you decisions in accord with His most holy will. May Heaven grant that, in deserving the plaudits of your contemporaries, you will gain also for yourselves the name of peacemakers among future generations.

As for Us, closely united in prayer and penitence with all faithful souls who sigh for peace, we pray the Divine Spirit to grant you light and counsel.

#### CARDINAL GASPARRI TO MR. LLOYD GEORGE <sup>1</sup>

. . . The Holy Father, out of regard for the belligerent Powers, did not think it well to suggest in his letter <sup>2</sup> means suited to establish and maintain that mutual and simultaneous

<sup>1</sup> 28 September 1917: the text of the letter is to be found in *The Peace Proposals made by His Holiness the Pope to the belligerent powers on 1 August 1917 and correspondence relative thereto*, printed for Parliament in that year: a French translation of the Italian original is in *La Patrie et la Paix*, pp. 152-4.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. the Peace Note.

disarmament which all desire, and which is the true basis of peace and prosperity. He preferred rather to leave the choice of such means to the Powers themselves.

But he considers that the only practical and easily attainable means is the following: there should be an agreement between all civilised nations, including non-belligerents, to abolish, mutually and simultaneously, obligatory military service; an arbitration court should be set up to decide international disputes and as a sanction against any nation which attempted to re-establish conscription, or which refused to submit its international differences to arbitration or to accept the court's decision, a general boycott should be established.

To leave aside other arguments, the recent examples of England and of America prove that the voluntary system of military service can provide all the force needed for the maintenance of public order, while not furnishing the enormous armies that modern warfare calls for. And so, if by a common agreement conscription were abolished and the voluntary system introduced, we should, without any disturbance of public order, bring about disarmament almost automatically, with all the results therefrom accruing to the establishment of a lasting peace between the nations (as far as that is possible in this world), and to the restoration of the exhausted finances of the several states in the shortest possible time, to say nothing of other advantages that everyone can easily envisage. Conscription has been the real cause of many great evils for now more than a century: in the mutual simultaneous abolition of conscription lies the sole remedy. Once it is done away with it would not be possible, even under the present constitution of the Central Empires, for it to be re-established without a law voted in the parliament (and such a vote would, for many reasons, be unlikely). So there would be not only the pledge of the rulers, but also that guarantee from the peoples which personages in high authority <sup>1</sup> have in recent documents been demanding. . . .

<sup>1</sup> A reference to a recent declaration of President Wilson.

CARDINAL GASPARRI TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF SENS <sup>1</sup>

MY LORD,

I thank you with all my heart for the kind letter which you were so good as to write to me. The Holy Father, to whom I showed it without delay, appreciates very keenly your just judgement of the appeal for peace made in his note of August 1 last.

You must have seen, My Lord, my letter to the Bishop of Valence,<sup>2</sup> which reveals the astonishment caused me by the generally hostile reception given the Peace Note by the French press. In that letter I have shown (what indeed a simple reading of the papal note should show) that no one of the points proposed by the Holy Father as bases for a just and lasting peace ought to have any power to wound French susceptibilities. Nay more, several of those points are decidedly favourable to France, so that if there can be said to be any nation favoured by the papal note it is not Germany nor Austria but decidedly France and Belgium. Hence my great surprise and my astonishment.

The papal note has been set before the public as a document inspired by the Central Empire and inspired especially by Austria. 'This assertion is absolutely false.' The declaration of the Holy See and of the German Chancellor, the replies of the Central Empires, the opposition of the pan-Germanic and conservative press in Germany put this matter beyond all doubt. I can also add that, owing to a wholly accidental delay in sending out the note, the Emperor of Austria and his Government were actually the last to have any knowledge of the papal note.

Besides, the genesis of the note is very simple, and there is no need to call in any foreign inspiration [to explain it]. From the declarations of statesmen and of parliaments on both sides among the belligerent Powers the Holy See had noted, and

<sup>1</sup> Mgr Chesnelong: the date of the letter is 7 October 1917. The text is printed in *La Patrie et la Paix*, pp. 154-9.

<sup>2</sup> Mgr Martin de Gibergues.

with the keenest satisfaction, that on certain fundamental points, all were in substantial agreement. The Holy See, then, has set these points down together, inviting the Powers to say themselves more precisely what they have in mind, to complete their declarations, and to examine the points in a conciliatory spirit, taking account, as far as is just and possible, of the aspirations of the peoples. There, in a word, you have the whole story of the papal letter of August 1.

For example, almost all the belligerents—Russia, France, England, Germany and Austria—have declared that there ought to be no question of indemnities in the peace settlement. Russia, Germany and Austria made no distinction about war damage, thus indicating that reparations for such damage would not be demanded. M. Ribot <sup>1</sup> alone declared that France, in any negotiations about the future peace, reserved the right to claim reparation for damages done on French territory, unnecessarily, through the fault of the military authorities. It was for this reason that the Holy See, in the third point of the appeal, proposed as a general rule the mutual condonation of war expenses and damage and added that ‘If, in certain cases, there exist, nevertheless, special reasons, let these be weighed with justice and equity.’

This suggestion, conceived in general terms, did not exclude the reservations formulated by M. Ribot. And France remains free to judge whether—supposing her to be victorious—it will suit her interests to continue the war—even for no more than another year—in order to exact from Germany reparation for damage Germany has caused.

It has also been said that the Holy Father, as the supreme judge of morality and of justice, ought, before all else, to have stated on which side right lay, on which side wrong. Truly this is curious criticism. The Holy Father, in his letter, assumes, for the sake of humanity, the role of *mediator*, doing his best to bring the belligerent nations (each of whom claims to be in the right) to lay down their arms, to enter into negotia-

<sup>1</sup> Then the French Premier.

tions, and to be reconciled one to the other. Now I ask you, my lord, is it any part of the business of a *mediator* to decide which of the parties is in the right, which in the wrong? Supposing the mediator wanted to decide this question, is it at all likely that he would attain his proposed purpose, namely to bring the two sides along the path of reconciliation and peace?

Finally, the objection has also been made—I omit points that are less important—that not all these proposals of the Holy Father are practically possible. Especially has it been said that mutual simultaneous disarmament must be regarded as a hope destined never to be realised. Now, without exception, all parties would like disarmament, seeing in this the sole means of averting the peril of war, of remedying the financial difficulties of states and of preventing the social upheavals which, otherwise, we have only too much reason to fear are upon us. But directly the question arises how to realise this desire and how to prevent rearmament, the agreement ceases. I have no hesitation in saying frankly that none of the systems so far considered is really practicable. And yet there does exist a system that will be effective. . . .

(And then the Cardinal repeats what he has proposed in the letter to Mr. Lloyd George already quoted.<sup>1</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> The Peace Note of 1 August 1917 was not the first, nor the last, of Benedict XV's diplomatic interventions during the war. Fr. de la Briere, S.J., lists no fewer than seventeen in the appendix to *La Patrie et la Paix*.<sup>\*</sup> There are proposals for the mutual exchange of the incurably wounded, for the exchange of certain classes of civilian prisoners, for the transfer to a neutral country of those permanently injured, and of prisoners who were fathers of three children and more. The pope's diplomatic action was also successful in securing from the Central Empires that prisoners of war would not be forced to work on Sundays. We may also note the pope's protestation to Germany against the deportation of French and Belgians to work in Germany; protestations, also to Germany, against reprisals on prisoners of war; to Austria against the bombardment of open towns, and to Italy against the confiscation of the Roman residence of the Austrian ambassador to the Holy See. And from the *Osservatore Romano* of 31 December 1917 we learn that several times, Benedict XV had protested to Germany and Austria against their violation of International Law in methods of warfare.<sup>†</sup>

Much of this diplomatic activity of the Holy See has only been publicly known since the end of the war. Better known—and yet never really well

## THE ENCYCLICAL PACEM DEI MUNUS

*Benedict XV's inaugural Ad Beatissimi is the papal comment on the outbreak of the first world war; in this later encyclical we may discern the emotions and anxieties aroused in the pope by the work of the Peace Conference that closed it. Nowhere does the pope venture into political technicalities, and pass judgement on any one of the things done at Versailles. But he makes no secret that his alarm for the future is scarcely diminished, for all that the nations no longer face each other on battlefields through all the countries of the world. The theme of his letter—and the basis of an adverse judgement surely implicit in its every line?—is that reconciliation is impossible except through a peace that is Christian. This was a hard saying for all the nations, and the pope must have known as he said it that, yet once again, many would be moved thereby to leave him. To show with what apostolic courage the pope spoke frankly at this time, alike to Germans and to Frenchmen, extracts are given from two other of his letters, and with these we take leave of an unusually great pope, a man formed in adversity and proved of heroic charity, whose own children*

known—was the immense work of charity done to all belligerents, irrespective of nationality or religion. The principal instrument of this work was the Prisoners of War Bureau set up at the Vatican in December 1914, as a means of communication and relief between the prisoners and their families. Then there are a whole series of letters of sympathy—sixty-one noted in DE LA BRIÈRE (op. cit.\*) to the bishops and peoples of the various countries, twelve of them to Belgium and twenty-two to France. And, with the letters, alms on a truly munificent scale, if the pope's scanty resources be considered. During the war it was to the countries devastated by the German occupation that the alms chiefly went; afterwards to Russia and to the starving people and children of Central Europe. In the course of the war itself Benedict XV gave away some five and a half million lire from his own purse, and another thirty millions gathered by collections in what Catholic churches he could get in touch with.

The list printed in *La Patrie et la Paix* of Benedict XV's 'interventions' in the cause of peace contains in all 168 items (8 September 1914 † to 5 December 1921), and the list is not complete, even for the public acts of this great war-time pope.

\* pp. 428-36.

† The pope was elected five days earlier.

*largely failed to appreciate him in the time of his apostolate and speedily forgot him once death, all too prematurely, claimed him.*

*An English translation of the encyclical, called *The Re-establishment of Christian Peace*,<sup>1</sup> will be found in *The Pope and the People: the text of the two letters that follow the summary of Pacem Dei Munus*, and a French translation of them, are printed in *La Patrie et la Paix*. Here, in analysis, are the main divisions of the encyclical.*

**I. CHRISTIAN PEACE ALONE CAN WORK RECONCILIATION.** *The pope's anxiety about peace persists despite the signing of the Treaty of Versailles; the pope, in the same spirit and with the same aims which guided all his action during the war, writes an exhortation to 'all mankind, to clear their hearts of bitterness.' The Settlement between the Belligerents a mischievous mockery, so long as men's hearts remain unreconciled. The sole source and secret of this reconciliation is Christian Charity. What this means in practice.*

**II. A SYMBOLIC EXAMPLE FROM THE POPE.** *The Holy See will set an example by withdrawing one of the outward signs of its protest against the fait accompli of the Italian king's usurpation of the papal states.*

**III. THE IDEA OF A LEAGUE OF NATIONS.** *The Need for a League of Nations; what the League presupposes; how the Church can and will assist such a movement.*

#### I. CHRISTIAN PEACE ALONE CAN WORK RECONCILIATION

'PEACE, the most beautiful of God's gifts,' so the letter opens, 'begins at last to shine upon the nations.' But the joy which the news of the cessation of war and the signing of the treaties

<sup>1</sup> The Latin text bears the title *De Pacis Reconciliatione Christiana*—The Christian Reconciliation of Peace.

brings is, alas, tempered 'by many bitter anxieties.' Peace is established indeed, so far as treaties go, but 'the germs of former enmities remain' and no peace can be stable, no treaties last 'unless there be a return of mutual charity to appease hate and banish enmity.' How is this to be done? Here is 'the anxious and dangerous question' which needs to be solved, and whose elements the pope proposes, in this encyclical, to set before the bishops that they, in turn, may bring the question home to their peoples.

Benedict XV's aim, ever since, in the first weeks of the war, he was elected to his high responsibility, had been not merely to bring the war to an end, but to pacify men's minds, 'that all the nations . . . might resume cordial relations as soon as possible.' Hence his ceaseless exhortations; hence the series of proposals made to the Powers at war; hence his immense efforts to lighten everywhere the 'terrible load of sorrow and disaster' that was the war's dreadful accompaniment. And now that arms are laid aside and the treaties signed, 'now that comparative peace has been concluded,' the pope feels he must take this opportunity 'to exhort . . . all mankind to clear their hearts of bitterness, that this may give place to mutual love and concord.'

A peace that existed only in the declarations of the treaties while 'latent hostility and enmity continued among the nations,' would be a source of immense mischief. This is obvious enough, says the pope, but it needs to be pointed out that in nothing would the harm done be greater than to Christian life everywhere, for 'the whole essence of Christian life is charity, so that the very preaching of Christian life is called [by Holy Scripture] the *Gospel of Peace*.' <sup>1</sup>

It is the essence of Christianity that is then endangered, for thousands and millions of souls. 'Nothing was so often and so carefully instilled into His disciples by Jesus Christ as this precept of mutual charity as the one which embraces all the

<sup>1</sup> Eph. vi, 15.

others. He called it the *new* commandment, and He willed that it should be the badge and distinguishing mark of His followers.

'No less solemnly'—for it is part and parcel of this duty of Charity—Our Lord bids us consign to oblivion<sup>1</sup> the injuries inflicted on us. He even 'in teaching us to pray makes us say that we wish for pardon according as we pardon others: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." ' This law is hard, no doubt, to obey. To help our obedience we have the example of Our Lord Himself, who as He died on the Cross forgave those who so unjustly and so wickedly tortured Him. And the pope now, most solemnly, since, he says, he ought to be the first to follow that example (for he is the Vicar of Jesus Christ), declares that from the bottom of his heart he forgives all his enemies, all those, for example, 'who knowingly or unknowingly have heaped and are still heaping on Our person and on Our work every sort of vituperation. We embrace them all in Our charity and benevolence, excluding none of them from whatever opportunity presents itself to do them all the good in Our power.'

Christian Charity goes still further, however. It would have us treat our enemies with kindness, following again the example of Our Lord, who 'went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil,' and who in the end gave His very life for His enemies.

It is this kind of love that is needed to-day if the peace just signed is to be anything more than just a mockery of peace. 'Never perhaps as to-day has humanity so needed that universal beneficence which springs from the love of others and is full of sacrifice and zeal.' The pope recalls the millions now starving throughout Europe, the host of widows and orphans, 'the incredible number of enfeebled beings, particularly chil-

<sup>1</sup> *Iam quæ modo allata sunt ad preceptum mutui amoris urgendum, eadem ipsa valent ad oblivionem iniuriarum: the English translation runs: 'What has been said in favour of charity holds good for the inculcation of the pardoning of injuries'—this, it seems to me, waters down the pope's insistence more than a little.*

dren and young people, who carry in their bodies the ravages of this atrocious war.' There is only one Healer for misery so vast. Once more it is the Divine Samaritan who needs 'to lay His hands upon the wounds of society.'

It is this work which the Church claims as her own. In all times and in all countries it is 'this many-sided Christian beneficence' which has softened hard hearts and made possible the return of real peace. And now the bishops everywhere must, once again, take up this task, urging Catholics 'to abandon hatred and forgive injuries . . . and to promote every work of Christian benevolence.' Priests especially should be, in this respect, an example to others, and Catholic writers and journalists 'show charity in their writings by abstaining not only from false and groundless accusations but also from all intemperance and bitterness of language.'

The pope next turns to the delicate matter of the feelings of the different nations, so lately at war, who have now set their signatures to the peace treaties. All we say to individuals about the duty of charity we must also say to the nations now delivered from war, he declares, so that 'when every cause of disagreement has been, as far as possible, removed, and without prejudice to the rights of justice, they may resume friendly relations among themselves.' The pope's purpose is that 'they may resume friendly relations among themselves,' and the words he uses call for careful consideration. The reconciliation so desired depends on two conditions, and to the first of these an important reservation seems to be attached: (1) 'the causes of disagreement having been, so far as is possible, removed'; (2) 'saving always the demands of justice.' That an ideally perfect settlement—it seems hinted—may not be possible should not be an obstacle to reconciliation, provided all do their best and this in a spirit of justice, i.e., of regard for the rights of the other side no less than for their own.

'There is not one law of charity for individuals and another for states and nations,' and even though motives of charity do not move states to obey the Gospel law, then the necessity of

the case should urge them to it: 'the nations are naturally drawn together by the need they have of one another.'

During the war the pope never wearied of preaching to all parties this Christian doctrine of forgiveness and reconciliation laid upon us by Christ's own most holy law, and demanded by the nature of men's relations one with another. Never, Benedict XV can say, did the pope allow these moral principles to be obscured by the hatred and disputes of the war. And in the months since the war ended he has more than once urged these principles upon the attention of all concerned. Here Benedict XV refers to his letter of 15 July 1919 to the bishops of Germany<sup>1</sup> and his letter of 7 October in that same year to the Archbishop of Paris.<sup>2</sup>

## II. A SYMBOLIC EXAMPLE FROM THE POPE

The pope has already acknowledged that it is his duty to set an example to all of this doctrine of forgiveness which he is now preaching. He has made a solemn declaration that he pardons from his heart all who have injured or are injuring him. And now, to emphasise the reality of his words and to translate them into act, as it were, Benedict XV announces an important modification in papal policy. The most obvious enemy of the Holy See is the State erected on the spoliation of the pope's own dominions, Italy, whose very capital and the palace of its king are really the capital and palace of the pope, spoil of an unjust war if ever there was one. After the Italian capture of Rome in 1870, the popes, in order to convince the world that they were still in spirit independent and were not become—as Bismarck had prophesied they must become—'chaplains to the House of Savoy,' steadfastly refused to recognise the new kingdom of Italy or to assent in any way to the *fait accompli*. And although they tolerated the sending of ambassadors to the Roman court of the Italian king on the part of Powers still in diplomatic relation with the Holy See,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra*, p. 283.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 284–285.

the popes demanded of Catholic sovereigns that, as an act in support of the papal attitude of independence of Italy, they should never as sovereign princes visit the Italian king in Rome. Since no prince could visit Rome as a sovereign and ignore the Italian king, this amounted to a total prohibition of state visits to Rome by Catholic princes. It is about this matter that the pope now makes an important concession, as an example of forgiveness to the other princes and states of Europe.

'Concord between civilised nations,' says Benedict XV, 'is maintained and fostered by the modern custom of visits and meetings at which the heads of states and princes are accustomed to treat of matters of special importance. So then, considering the changed circumstances of the times and the dangerous trend of events, and in order to encourage this concord, We would not be unwilling to relax in some measure the severity of the conditions justly laid down by Our predecessors, when the civil power of the Apostolic See was overthrown, against the official visits of the heads of the Catholic States to Rome.'

Benedict XV is, of course, careful to add that this relaxation is not to be taken as meaning that the Holy See now accepts 'the unlawful situation in which it is placed . . . that abnormal condition which in so many ways does such serious harm to the tranquillity of nations.'

### III. THE IDEA OF A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The pope finally speaks about one of the most actual topics of the day, the idea of a League of Nations; an idea to which concrete form had been given in the recently signed Treaty of Versailles. 'It is certainly to be desired,' he says, 'that all states, putting aside suspicion, should unite in one league, or rather in a sort of family of peoples, designed both to maintain their own independence and to safeguard the order of human society.' One reason above all should induce states to join in such a league, namely, 'the generally recognised need

of making every effort to abolish or reduce the enormous burden of the military expenditure which states can no longer bear, so that such disastrous wars may no longer be possible (or the danger of them be removed as far as possible) and so that every nation's territorial integrity may be preserved within the boundary of just frontiers, and with this its independence.'

But the pope will not base such hopes on any mere perfection of the League's executive machinery. He prefaces his commendation of the idea of such a league by a presupposition about the world in which it is to function. 'All things being restored in this way, therefore' (the pope has been speaking of forgiveness and reconciliation and his own concession just described), 'the system of justice and charity set up anew, with all the nations reconciled each with the other, it is certainly to be desired that all states . . . should unite in one league. . . .'

So 'to states united in the Christian law, the Church will certainly not refuse her zealous aid in whatever work of justice and charity they undertake,' and the pope, yet once again, recalls the wonderful means that are at the Church's disposal to bring about this desired and needed brotherhood of mankind, means which would profit even men's material well-being in this world, as well as their salvation in the next. What the Church accomplished for peace and civil prosperity in the Dark Ages she can still achieve in our times also. The Church can yet again form 'a homogeneous society . . . which whilst preserving a diversity of nations, tends to a unity favourable to prosperity and to glory.' And Benedict XV quotes St. Augustine's apostrophe to the Church: 'Citizens, peoples and all men, Thou shalt not only, recalling their common origin, unite among themselves, but Thou shalt make them brothers.'

Finally, says the pope, 'We turn affectionately to all Our children, and conjure them in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to forget mutual differences and injuries and draw together in the bonds of Christian charity. . . . We fervently

exhort all the nations to establish a true peace . . . and to join together in an alliance that shall be just and therefore lasting. . . . We appeal to all men and all peoples to join in mind and heart with the Catholic Church and through the Church with Christ the Redeemer of the human race. . . .' And the pope quotes St. Paul's words to the Ephesians . . . 'Now in Christ Jesus you who sometime were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and breaking down the middle wall of partition . . . killing the enmities in himself. And coming He preached peace to you that were afar off and peace to them that were nigh.' <sup>1</sup>

### THE LETTER *DIUTURNI*

In this letter, *Diuturni*, addressed to the bishops of Germany, 15 July 1919, the pope's first words are to join with them in thanksgiving that at last the long and terrible war is over. The first necessity now, he says, is to find food for the starving population and the pope is confident that good men everywhere, and the Catholics especially, will come to their aid.

Benedict XV then goes on to say—and this is the passage appropriate to the message of the encyclical *Pacem Dei Munus*: 'Next, Venerable Brothers, each one of you must set all the authority of your sacred office to heal those wounds of the spirit which the war has inflicted on your country or has aggravated. And especially the poison of hatred must be utterly destroyed, hatred of those foreign peoples with whom lately you were at war, hatred between your own peoples divided by political faction. And in place of this spirit, rouse up that brotherly love which comes from Jesus Christ, which knows no national frontiers, nor any barriers of class. . . .'

<sup>1</sup> Eph. ii, 13-17.

THE LETTER *AMOR ILLE*

This letter, of 7 October 1919, was addressed to the Archbishop of Paris, and read by him from the pulpit during the ceremony of the consecration of the basilica of the Sacred Heart at Montmartre.

The Sacred Heart, the pope says, in it, has ennobled France with many striking favours. France in return must show itself an especial servant of divine charity. Then the pope proceeds:

'While the Sacred Heart thus shows us in visible form the immense love of Jesus for His, alas all too frequently, forgetful children, it reminds us also of our great duty to love God above all things and our neighbour as ourself.

'Now this love for our neighbour, which is all the keener the more closely we are related to our neighbour, we must extend to all men, even to our enemies, since we are, all of us, bound by links of brotherhood, being all children of the one same God, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. "You have heard that it hath been said Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thy enemy. But I say to you, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you: That you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven." <sup>1</sup> Thus it was that Our Lord and Master spoke. . . .

'We are well aware that this commandment of Our Lord Jesus Christ does not please the world, is indeed so little what the world desires that those who proclaim and defend it as a holy command find the world distorts their intentions and covers them with contumely. So it was with Jesus Christ: so it has been with His Vicar: so will it always be for whoever preaches the forgetfulness of injuries and lovingkindness to those who have attacked their country. Nevertheless, no fear of displeasing wicked men should ever deter any of us from observing this most serious Gospel commandment, and from

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v, 43-45.

preaching it: upon this the peace of mankind and the prosperity of the nations chiefly depend. . . .'

### THE LETTER CON VIVO PIACERE <sup>1</sup>

*There is not any single, lengthy, specific declaration of Pius XI on the general problem of International Relations, for all that the acts of his reign are filled with 'interventions' in the cause of peace.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, from the major encyclicals already summarised, it can easily be seen that this pope too, might truly have said, with Leo XIII, 'Our eyes are not closed to the spirit of our time.' It may be useful to print here a few extracts, from texts never well known in this country, which not only show Pius XI in action at different European crises of the twenty years between the two world wars, but show also the continuity during these years of the Holy See's policy, namely its faithful repetition of the age-long principles, its steadfast refusal to judge between states that do not appeal to it for judgement, its readiness to make practical suggestions, and its genuine neutrality whose sole aim is peace for the sake of the ordinary man everywhere.*

*This letter, Con Vivo Piacere, was written on the occasion of the International Congress of Genoa—the first congress after the war to which the lately vanquished nations and Soviet Russia were invited. Two months only had passed since Pius XI was elected, and the letter is thus a very early indication of the spirit that animated all his reign.*

Pius XI notes how 'the general hopes of all the peoples' turn to this congress, and how he therefore prays that 'the delegates of the Powers will study the lamentable state in which, everywhere, men now find themselves, not only with calm,

<sup>1</sup> The letter dated 7 April 1922, is addressed to the Archbishop of Genoa: the text is printed in *La Patrie et la Paix*, pp. 364-5.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the list of fifty-three 'interventions' (down as far as Easter 1937) in *La Patrie et la Paix*, pp. 439-44.

but also in a spirit ready to make certain sacrifices on the altar of the common good.' Such a readiness is the *conditio sine qua non* of any effective plan to pacify the world. Mutual Charity is, in fact, an essential need 'and this all the more since the international hatred which is the war's sad legacy is proving a misfortune even to the victor nations and is preparing a terrible future for the whole world; it must never be forgotten that the best security for peace is not a forest of bayonets, but mutual friendship and confidence.'

Reparations may not figure on the agenda of the congress, says Pius XI, but it would be wise to take the opportunity for preliminary soundings 'about what might make it easier for the conquered states to acquit themselves promptly of their pledges—a thing just as profitable in the end to the conquerors also.'

### THE LETTER QUANDO NEL PRINCIPIO <sup>1</sup>

*This letter, addressed to Cardinal Gasparri and dated 24 June 1923, is written to comment on the events centring round the French occupation of the Ruhr in 1923—a military occupation designed to compel a more prompt German repayment of the pledged reparation. The occupation was inevitably accompanied by all manner of 'incidents,' and a European crisis threatened.*

The international situation, says Pius XI, has worsened considerably since the Congress of Genoa. Now, when the Powers particularly interested are reconsidering the basis of future action, the pope cannot be silent.

'We beseech the rulers yet once again,' he says, 'to examine these different questions—and especially this question of reparations—in that Christian spirit which never divorces the demands of justice from those of social charity, social charity being for the system of states the basis of its perfection.'

<sup>1</sup> Text in *La Patrie et la Paix*, pp. 382-4.

'If then, the debtor, with the intention of making good the immense damage suffered by once prosperous and flourishing peoples and countries, gives proof of a real will to assent to an arrangement which is equitable and defined; if he asks for an impartial decision as to the limits of his own solvency, and pledges himself to allow the experts every means of exercising a check that is true and exact; then justice and social charity—to say nothing of the creditor's own interests, and the interest of all the nations worn out by the wars and longing for peace—seem to demand that the debtor is not asked to pay so much that he cannot find it without entirely exhausting his own resources and his own productive capacity. Were this to be asked of him, the irreparable mischief would follow—for him and for his creditors alike—of social disturbances that would finally ruin Europe itself, and of hates that would foster new threats of yet further disaster and destruction.

'It is, on the other hand, only just that the creditors should have guarantees proportionate to the amount due to them, guarantees which would ensure the recovery of those sums upon which depend the creditors' own no less vital interests.

'Whether, in order to secure this, it be necessary for the creditors to maintain, in every case, these occupations of territory, which are so costly to both sides, or whether it would not serve their convenience better to substitute for this, at any rate gradually, other no less suitable guarantees (and guarantees certainly less painful) is a consideration we leave to the Powers concerned.

'If both parties accept these peaceful standards <sup>1</sup> one consequence will be that the bitterness of the territorial occupation will vanish and if the occupation itself is reduced, and even perhaps entirely done away with, there will at last be some likelihood of that real pacification of the nations which is so real a condition of the economic restoration for which all so ardently long.

'Such a pacification and such a restoration are, to all the na-

<sup>1</sup> *Questi pacifici criteri* are the words of the Italian original.

tions, to victors as to vanquished, advantages so great that, to gain them, no sacrifice could seem too great once it is known to be necessary.' Such great advantages are also, of course, a great mercy, and the pope's thought immediately turns to man's obvious need to seek these advantages first of all in prayer from God from whom comes 'every good and perfect gift.'<sup>1</sup>

*The two last extracts have shown Pius XI offering concrete advice for particular problems. Here are texts, from the address Benedetto il Natale, the encyclical Caritate Christi Compulsi and the speech to the Nurses' Congress, in which the pope analyses the general problem of the so-called 'will to peace,' and he does this in the light of the principles that are eternal, showing how International Peace can never really exist so long as social injustice prevents real domestic peace within the several nations.*

## THE ADDRESS BENEDETTO IL NATALE<sup>2</sup>

The pope, speaking to the College of Cardinals, explains, yet once again,<sup>3</sup> that only the 'Peace of Christ' can satisfy the needs of the time. To make this Peace known, to saturate the atmosphere of our time with the idea, and with the desire to see it realised, is a duty for all Catholics. But, says Pius XI, 'It must be indeed the Peace of Christ and not any sentimental pacifism, confused, imprudent, taking no account of dangers. . . .'<sup>4</sup> It must be that Peace of God 'which surpasses all understanding,'<sup>5,6</sup> and Pius XI develops his teaching in a commentary of this text.

<sup>1</sup> James i, 17.

<sup>2</sup> The date of the address is 24 December 1930; the text is in *La Patrie et la Paix*, pp. 389-92.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *supra*, *Ubi Arcano Dei*, pp. 24-28.

<sup>4</sup> *Scevro di pericoli*, in the Italian text.

<sup>5</sup> The pope, speaking in Italian, quotes the Latin Vulgate, *Pax Dei quae superat omnem sensum* and, in his commentary, he gives to *sensum* its primitive meaning of *senses* rather than the secondary meaning *understanding*, which all our English versions of the Vulgate give.

<sup>6</sup> Phil. iv, 7.

'The peace of Christ,' he says, 'the true peace, rises above all senses,' and it is a serious mistake to believe that true and lasting peace can ever reign among men and peoples so long as they give their first and chief and most eager care to the chase after the goods that please the senses; material, and earthly goods that satisfy the feelings. These good things, since they are finite, could hardly ever satisfy everyone, even supposing (and it is difficult to suppose it) that no one ever wanted the lion's share. . . . These good things are, almost inevitably, the source of cupidity and of hate, of disputes and conflicts. . . .

'Another mistake against which St. Paul would here warn us, in his divinely inspired message, is that of believing that there can be any external peace between men or nations where there is no internal peace; where, that is to say, the spirit of peace does not possess men's minds and hearts, their entire souls, the mind that it may see and respect the rights of justice, the heart because with justice there is joined, what must even come before justice, charity. For if Peace, according to the prophet<sup>1</sup> is the work and the fruit of justice, it yet belongs rather to charity than to justice as St. Thomas<sup>2</sup> luminously teaches us, and as the very nature of things necessitates.

'Alas, this interior peace of mind and heart can hardly reign in any lasting way over citizens and social classes while bitter reasons for conflict between citizens and social classes are caused and are kept in being by the unjust and disproportionate distribution of advantages and burdens; of rights and duties; of the contributions of capital, of management, and of labour; and of the share in those fruits which can only come into existence through the friendly co-operation of all these.

'It is yet more difficult, not to say impossible, that peace can last between peoples and states, if instead of a true, genuine patriotism they are dominated and perverted by a harsh and selfish nationalism; by hatred and envy, that is to say, instead of a mutual desire of well being; by diffidence and suspicion, in-

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxxii, 17.

<sup>2</sup> 2-2, q. 29, a. III, ad 3.

stead of brotherly trustfulness; by competition and strife, instead of harmonious co-operation; by ambitious desires of domination, instead of respect for rights and a will to protect the rights of all and especially of the weak.

'It is absolutely impossible for the peoples to possess and enjoy that ordered calm and freedom which is the very essence of peace, so long as threats and dangers hang over them, from within and from without, and against all these there is no provision of sufficient means of defence.

'Threats and dangers are indeed inseparable from the ever-increasing anti-social and anti-religious propaganda; but it is not with material means alone that men can ward off these and overcome them.

'As for the threats of a new war, while the people of the world still suffer so cruelly from the last inhuman scourge, We do not want to believe, We cannot believe that these threats are made with any reality. We cannot believe that there exists any civilised state which could wish so monstrously to become a murderer and, all but certainly, a suicide. And if We were forced to harbour even a positive doubt that such a state existed, We should have to pray to God with the inspired words "Break up the nations that wish for war" . . .'<sup>1</sup>

### THE ENCYCLICAL *CARITATE CHRISTI* *COMPULSI*<sup>2</sup>

This brief encyclical, dated 3 May 1932, gives again a striking warning against false patriotism as a thing destructive of any real desire for peace.

Pius XI has been speaking of 'the sordid selfishness' which is fostered by a love of money, and which 'only too often domi-

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxvii, 31.

<sup>2</sup> English translation, called *The Troubles of Our Time: A Call to Prayer and Penance*, in *Selected Encyclicals*, II (Catholic Truth Society): the Latin original bears the sub-title *On Offering Prayers and Expiation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the present Distress of Mankind*.

nates the whole lives of individuals and communities.' 'Here is the source,' the pope continues, 'of that wicked disorder, that unjust distribution of goods, whose effect is to concentrate the riches of the nations in the hands of a small group of private citizens who—as We noted in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*—regulate the markets of the world according to their fancy, to the great damage of the mass of mankind.

'Now if this too great love of self and of one's own, abusing the lawful love of fatherland, and extolling beyond what is right the sentiment of fitting love for one's own nation . . . creeps into the mutual relations and treaties between the different peoples, there will be no crime so great that it may not appear to be blameless; so much so that crimes which, if perpetrated by private citizens, would be reprobated by all, will be thought good actions, and worthy of praise, if done from motives of patriotism.

'Thence it naturally comes about that hatred, ruinous to all, takes the place of the divine law of loving brotherhood which bound all nations and all races in a single family under the one Father who is in heaven. In the administration of public affairs the laws of God—the pattern of all civilised life and culture—are trodden under foot. The notions of right and good faith which are the sure foundations of every state are overthrown. The traditions of past ages which considered the worship of God and the observance of His law as the foundation of a healthy national life, are corrupted and buried out of sight. . . .

'To create this atmosphere of lasting peace, treaties of peace are not enough. Nor will the most solemn pacts suffice, nor international meetings and conferences, nor even the noblest and most disinterested efforts of any statesman unless, in the first place, the sacred rights of the natural and the divine law are recognised. No administrator of a nation's economic system, nor any talent for organisation, will ever be able peacefully to unravel the tangle of social conditions unless first, in the field of economics itself, the moral law triumphs, based on God and conscience. This is the chief nerve centre of the whole

national life, of political life and of economic life; this is the soundest investment of all. If this remains secure all the rest will keep steady, guaranteed, as it will be, by the unchangeable eternal law of God.' <sup>1</sup>

## THE ADDRESS TO THE CONGRESS OF CATHOLIC NURSES

The approach of the war between Italy and Abyssinia, in 1935, brought from Pius XI a remarkable declaration on the limitations imposed by Christian morality on the action of those who propose to go to war. The pope, in this address, condemns wars undertaken for the sake of conquest merely, and also gives a stern reminder that, even in wars that are defensive, wars that are inevitable, a certain morality must be observed which weighs the proportion between the evil likely to be wrought by the war and the evil suffered at the moment, and to end which the war is undertaken. The address was spoken to the International Congress of Catholic nurses, at Castel Gondolfo, 27 August 1935.

'The mere thought of war,' the pope has been saying, must make us all shudder. 'Already,' he goes on to say, 'we notice, they are speaking abroad of a war of conquest, an offensive war.'<sup>2</sup> This is a supposition upon which We will not allow Our thoughts to linger. It is a supposition that fills us with consternation. A war that was merely a war of conquest would obviously be an unjust war. That is a thing which is beyond all imagination, a thing indescribably sad and horrible. We cannot envisage its possibility, and deliberately We put it outside all consideration; We do not believe, We will not believe [there is being planned] an unjust war.

<sup>1</sup> This translation of the encyclical *Caritate Christi Compulsi* is, I believe, closer here to the original than that in the Catholic Truth Society volume, *Selected Encyclicals*, II.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., apparently this, in non-Italian countries, is how Italy's intentions towards Abyssinia are being interpreted.

'On the other hand, it is being said in Italy, that what is under consideration is a war that is just, because it is a war of defence, a war waged to safeguard the frontier against continued and incessant dangers, a war become necessary through the expansion of a daily increasing population, a war undertaken to defend or to make certain the material security of a country, [that] a war of this kind would by the very fact be a just war.

'It is, however, true (and We cannot prevent Ourselves from reflecting on this) that, if there is this need for expansion, if also there exists the need to assure the safety of the frontiers through defence, We cannot but desire that all these difficulties may come to be solved by some other means than war. By what means? Obviously, it is not easy to say; but We do not believe it to be impossible. This possibility ought to be studied.

'One thing seems to Us beyond all doubt; that is to say, that if the need for expansion is a fact that has to be considered, the right of defence has limitations and restrictions which must be observed if the defence is to be without blame.'

### THE ADDRESS IN QUESTO GIORNO

*This is the address<sup>1</sup> to the College of Cardinals in which Pius XII first set out the 'Five Peace Points' which have since become, in England, the basis of a co-operative work in which Catholics and non-Catholics have joined.*

The address is, formally, a reply to the Christmas wishes of the cardinals, and the pope naturally begins with some reflections on the great mystery which the feast commemorates. What, this year, seems to him its principal feature is that the

<sup>1</sup> The address was spoken on 24 December 1939, the first Christmas Eve of the war. The translation used here is that by Canon G. D. Smith, published by the Catholic Truth Society under the title *The Pope's Five Peace Points* (nineteen pages).

birth of Our Lord was 'a revelation of peace,' of peace between God and man and peace on earth to men of good will. Here is the great gift of God which brings to the world that 'true joy which is found only in the repose of the spirit . . . the joy no man shall take from us.'<sup>1</sup> And indeed men's hearts to-day have need of such a joy, when 'the unspeakable calamity of war . . . is now upon us as a tragic reality.'

The pope's first comment about the war is to note how, already, it has afforded opportunity for new crimes, and why. There have been, he says, 'a series of acts irreconcilable alike [i] with the precepts of positive international law and [ii] those of the law of nature, as well as [iii] with the elementary sentiments of humanity.'

Of these acts Pius XII gives some examples: 'Among such crimes We must include [i] a calculated act of aggression against a small, industrious, and peaceful nation, on the pretext of a threat which was neither real nor intended nor even possible; [ii] atrocities (by whichever side committed) and [iii] the unlawful use of destructive weapons against non-combatants and refugees, against old men and women and children; [iv] a disregard for the liberty and life of man, showing itself in acts which cry to heaven for vengeance: The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the earth,<sup>2</sup> and finally [v] an ever-growing, and increasingly methodical, anti-Christian and atheistic propaganda, especially among the young.' These acts 'show,' says the pope, 'in what a vicious circle the juridical sense becomes involved when it is led simply by considerations of expediency.'<sup>3</sup>

The great counter to this anti-Christian spirit is 'the teaching and the practice of charity . . . the service of truth and the strengthening of the bond of love,' and to this work the pope urges all, and especially the clergy.

Pius XII confesses that two things especially fill him with anxiety, two inevitable results of the present general state of

<sup>1</sup> John xvi, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. iv, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Summi Pontificatus*, *supra*, pp. 34-37, 39-45.

war. The first is 'the manifest and growing damage to souls caused by the spread of ideas which, more or less purposely and openly, are distorting and obscuring the truth' both for individuals and whole nations, and this generally throughout the world. Next there is the thought of 'the immense labour which will be necessary . . . in order to break down the gigantic walls of hatred and hostility which have been built up in the heat of the conflict.'

Something of these difficulties was already apparent in the last weeks before the war, when the pope found that the chief barrier which blocked all efforts to preserve the peace was that 'it appeared impossible to remove the deep feeling of distrust which during recent years had been steadily growing and had placed insurmountable spiritual barriers between one nation and another.' It was not that the international problems involved were insoluble—the pope gives this explicitly as his opinion. 'But that lack of confidence, due to a series of particular circumstances, presented an almost insuperable obstacle to faith in the efficacy of any promises or in the lasting character of possible agreements.' And it was 'the recollection of the short and troubled duration of similar pacts and agreements in the past' which 'finally paralysed all efforts to promote a peaceful solution.'

In these circumstances all that the pope has been able to do is to work for the alleviation of the terrible misfortune of the war as it affects individuals, and even here his endeavours have been 'not a little obstructed by the impossibility, not yet overcome, of bringing the aid of Christian Charity to those regions where the need of it is most urgently felt.'

The pope is anxious for the economic future of the world no less than for its spiritual fate. How can the nations—all the nations—escape 'a kind of pernicious anæmia?' 'The inevitable question arises: How will an exhausted or attenuated economy contrive to find the means necessary for economic and social reconstruction at a time when difficulties of every kind will be multiplied, difficulties of which the disruptive and revolution-

ary forces now holding themselves in readiness will not fail to take advantage, in the hope of striking a decisive blow at Christian Europe?'

No country can afford to overlook such considerations, or can afford not to weigh the ills that threaten against 'the aims and justifiable purposes of the war.' And none who do so reflect, and who note what symptoms of future troubles are already discernible, will close their minds to the prospect 'at an opportune moment and so far as it lies with them to do so' of 'defining clearly the fundamental points of a just and honourable peace.' No country that so reflects will refuse categorically to discuss such a peace, if [i] 'a suitable occasion, with [ii] the needful guarantees and safeguards' presents itself.

With which preliminary, the pope presents his Five Points. Here they are, textually, in full.

#### I

A fundamental postulate of any just and honourable peace is an assurance for all nations great or small, powerful or weak, of their right to life and independence. The will of one nation to live must never mean the sentence of death passed upon another. When this equality of rights has been destroyed, attacked, or threatened, order demands that reparation shall be made, and the measure and extent of that reparation is determined, not by the sword nor by the arbitrary decision of self-interest, but by the rules of justice and reciprocal equity.

#### II

The order thus established, if it is to continue undisturbed and ensure true peace, requires that the nations be delivered from the slavery imposed upon them by the race for armaments, and from the danger that material force, instead of serving to protect the right, may become an overbearing and tyrannical master. Any peaceful settlement which fails to give fundamental importance to a mutually agreed, organic, and

progressive disarmament, spiritual as well as material, or which neglects to ensure the effective and loyal implementing of such an agreement, will sooner or later show itself to be lacking in coherence and vitality.

## III

The maxims of human wisdom require that in any reorganisation of international life all parties should learn a lesson from the failures and deficiencies of the past. Hence in creating or reconstructing international institutions which have so high a mission and such difficult and grave responsibilities, it is important to bear in mind the experience gained from the ineffectiveness or imperfections of previous institutions of the kind. Human frailty renders it difficult, not to say impossible, to foresee every contingency and guard against every danger at the moment in which treaties are signed; passion and bitter feeling are apt to be still rife. Hence in order that a peace may be honourably accepted and in order to avoid arbitrary breaches and unilateral interpretations of treaties, it is of the first importance to erect some juridical institution which shall guarantee the loyal and faithful fulfilment of the conditions agreed upon, and which shall, in case of recognised need, revise and correct them.

## IV

If a better European settlement is to be reached there is one point in particular which should receive special attention: it is the real needs and the just demands of nations and populations, and of racial minorities. It may be that, in consequence of existing treaties incompatible with them, these demands are unable to establish a strictly legal right. Even so, they deserve to be examined in a friendly spirit with a view to meeting them by peaceful methods, and even, where it appears necessary, by means of an equitable and covenanted revision of the treaties themselves. If the balance between nations is thus adjusted and

the foundation of mutual confidence thus laid, many incentives to violent action will be removed.

## v

But even the best and most detailed regulations will be imperfect and foredoomed to failure unless the peoples and those who govern them submit willingly to the influence of that spirit which alone can give life, authority, and binding force to the dead letter of international agreements. They must develop that sense of deep and keen responsibility which measures and weighs human statutes according to the sacred and inviolable standards of the law of God; they must cultivate that hunger and thirst after justice which is proclaimed as a beatitude in the Sermon on the Mount and which supposes as its natural foundation the moral virtue of justice; they must be guided by that universal love which is the compendium and most general expression of the Christian ideal, and which therefore may serve as a common ground also for those who have not the blessing of sharing the same faith with us.

There are 'grave difficulties' in the way of achieving these ends; the pope openly says this. But never was there an objective that so deserved 'the collaboration of all noble and generous minds.' Never was there a spiritual crusade which might better assume as its motto 'God wills it' than 'this high purpose, this crusade, enlisting all unselfish and great-hearted men in an endeavour to lead the nations back from the broken cisterns of material and selfish interests to the living fountain of divine justice, which alone is able to provide that morality, nobility and stability the necessity of which has been so long experienced, to the great hurt of nations and of humanity.'

The foundations of true peace are justice and love. May men arise in every nation with foresight, good will, and courage to control 'the base instinct of revenge and set up in its stead the grave and noble majesty of justice, sister of love and consort of true wisdom.'

And the pope, in conclusion, returns to the theme with which his address began. For the inner principle of this needed justice is to be sought 'in Bethlehem,' where we shall find 'lying in the cradle Him who is born "the Son of Justice, Christ our God." . . . Let us then go over to Bethlehem.'

### THE BROADCAST NELL' ALBA <sup>1</sup>

*This, the latest of all the pontifical directions, was a special Christmas message, broadcast by the pope and addressed to the whole world.*

Pius XII begins with a reference to the mystery of the God-man's birth which the feast of Christmas commemorates, and to the survival, after twenty centuries, of the faith in Christ which then first lit up the world's darkness. Despite all the storms, the star still shines that shone then over the cradle of the newly born Redeemer. It is a sign to us never to despair; it sends out a light of comfort, of hope, of unshakeable faith, of life and of certainty in the Redeemer's triumph, which will overflow in the inward peace and the heavenly glory of all those who, raised to the supernatural order of grace, shall have received the power to become the children of God because it is of God that they are born.

The terrible war that now spares none its torments and anxieties, makes it still more the pope's duty to comfort and strengthen all who are suffering. Even though the spectacle of courage 'defending rights and native soil,' of serenity in suffering, and of souls that burn like a holocaust for the victory of truth and justice, has about it something that is admirable, nevertheless the tale is terrible of battles, of the dead, of the

<sup>1</sup> Spoken on Christmas Eve, 1941. An English translation has, since this book was finished, been published by the Catholic Truth Society, under the title, *The Pope Speaks to the World*. The translation here is that broadcast from the Vatican Radio but collated with the spoken text as printed in the *Osservatore Romano*.

wounded, of prisoners, of mental and physical anguish, of material destruction too, 'and of those millions whom the inhuman conflict and brutal force have plunged into misery and want.'

The pope speaks most feelingly of the effect of the catastrophe on young people, whose health is undermined by the lack of food. National expenses meanwhile go rocketing to the skies, and war needs devour so much that it is found necessary to restrict production for civil and social life. Here is cause for grave anxiety to all who give any thought to the coming years. And the idea of force is choking and perverting the rule of law. Once make it possible, and provide easy opportunities, for individuals and social or political groups to injure the property, and the lives, of others; allow every other kind of moral destruction to throw into confusion the atmosphere of civil life; and you will soon see the very notions of good and bad, of lawfulness and injustice, lose all definite shape, become confused and, even threaten to disappear altogether.

Every priest knows how to-day a host of unspeakable sorrows and anxieties so oppress the human heart that, for many, all the joy has gone out of life. Men are dispirited, silent and indolent, suspicious of one another, and all but desperate in the face of events and of their needs. No one who has any care for the return to normal life and its activities can see, undisturbed, this spiritual confusion. And a real bitterness must invade the soul as it is realised how 'to-day there does not seem to be any slightest pathway to an understanding between the countries at war with each other, whose aims and programmes of war seem to be mutually irreconcilable.'

The pope next considers a theory, often heard these days, which would explain the war by saying, 'It is because Christianity has failed.' This is not the case; 'but men have rebelled against the true Christianity, the Christianity that is faithful to Christ, and against its teachings. They have fashioned for themselves a Christianity to their own taste, a new idol that cannot save them, something not out of keeping with their passionate

bodily lusts, their greed for gold . . . their pride of life.' They have set up this masquerade of a dead Christianity and now they proclaim that Christianity has failed to rise to the height of its mission.

So the pope proceeds to yet another examination of the conscience of the modern world. He gives praise to the states which have preserved for their people such great Christian gains as the sanctity of marriage, religious education, and the happy co-operation of Church and State. But he cannot, he says, pretend not to be aware of some terrible deficiencies, the steady de-christianising of life, for example, of the life of the individual and of the State. This began with a relaxing of old conventions and passed on to the weakening, and indeed to the undisguised denial, of truths and forces which should light up for the intellect the problem of good and evil, and strengthen every form of human life. Many people in Europe are suffering from 'a religious anæmia, that is spreading like a plague': it has so stricken them as to leave in their souls 'a moral void which no religious cleaning up, nor any national and international mythology will ever fill.' For years now and for centuries, every effort has been made to uproot from men's minds and hearts their faith in God as the Creator and Father of all, the rewarder of good, and the punisher of evil doing; every effort has been made to travesty and to oppose and oppress the religion and the Church of Jesus Christ.

When man sank to the depths in morals, withdrew from God and abandoned the practice of the Christian religion, it was inevitable that the whole of his activity should centre round things merely material. It was to extend his empire over these that henceforward man sweated and toiled, to pile up riches, to increase the speed at which he could produce all that the advance of material progress proclaimed as necessary. In political life it was the impulse towards expansion that dominated all else, and political prestige completely indifferent to morals. In economic life the characteristic achievement was

the supremacy of gigantic trusts. In social life there was the pouring and overcrowding of the mass of the people into overpopulated cities and industrial districts, with all that instability which follows upon and accompanies humanity in the mass, men ever changing their houses and homes, their country-sides and trades, their passions and their friendships.

'From this it came about that the social relations of men took on a purely physical and mechanical character. In despite of every reasonable stay and consideration, the power of external constraint, the bare possession of power, were put above the rules of the order which regulates the common life of human beings,' the order in which there is a place for the supernatural and the natural, for rights and for love. This idea, that power confers and creates rights, has cheapened and killed the idea of the majesty and worth of human personality. 'Private property has become, for some, a power directed to the enjoyment of the work of others, and for other people it has begotten jealousy, impatience and hate.' An organised armed struggle for supremacy has followed between these parties. 'In certain countries, an atheistic or anti-Christian concept of the State so binds the individual citizen to itself, with its vast tentacles, as almost to deprive him of his independence and this in his private life no less than in his public life.'

A general movement so radically opposed to the principles of Christian doctrine is bound to issue in tension, domestic and international, that will destroy the human race. The war, far from halting this development, is speeding it up.

The pope is careful to protest, and to explain, that he is in no way condemning the great modern inventions, the technical progress that is the achievement of this age.

But to repair the damage done, to halt if possible the final catastrophe, there is but one means: a return to the altars, to the faith and its teachings, to the wise unshakable norms of a social system which would protect men from the abuse of freedom as well as from the abuse of power.

The coming reconstruction will be an opportunity: it will

also bring dangers and risks. If the great men who direct it do not learn to submit to God and His laws, we cannot escape catastrophe, 'deluded hopes and plans that miscarried' yet once again. To suffer disappointment and disillusion in the peace, after so horrible a war, will be more than humanity can possibly bear.

The much-desired 'New Order' will, in fact, need to be founded on 'the firm rock of the moral law,' which God has made known through the natural order of things and has engraved with indelible characters on all men's hearts. States must unanimously foster and proclaim this law, so that nowhere will any one dare to doubt its binding force. 'To repeat therefore and to state fully what We have said on other occasions, We now again insistently declare that there are certain essential presuppositions<sup>1</sup> for any international order which, assuring to all peoples a just and lasting peace, is to be fruitful in well being and prosperity.'

I. THE INCONTESTIBLE RIGHTS OF THE SMALL STATE. 'Within the new order founded on moral principles there is no place for the violation of the freedom, integrity and security of other states, no matter what may be their territorial extension or their capacity for defence. It may be inevitable that the great states should, by reason of their greater potentialities and power, trace out the way in the formation of economic groups that include not only themselves but also smaller and weaker states. Nevertheless, the rights of the small states are incontestible—like the rights of the great states, in the scheme of the general welfare—rights [i] to respect for their freedom in the political field, [ii] to the effective maintenance, in the conflicts between states, of that neutrality which belongs to them according to Natural Law and to International Law, [iii] to the protection of their economic development, since only in this way will they be able adequately to achieve the common welfare, the material and spiritual well being of their own people.'

<sup>1</sup> These five 'essential presuppositions' are printed textually, in full.

II. THE RIGHTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES. 'Within the limits of a new order founded on moral principles there is no place for open or secret oppression of the cultural and linguistic characteristics of national minorities, for the hindrance or restriction of their economic resources, or for the limitation or abolition of their natural fertility. The more conscientiously the Government of the State respects the rights of minorities, the more confidently and the more effectively can it demand from its members a loyal fulfilment of civil duties in common with the other citizens.'

III. THE RIGHT OF ALL NATIONS TO SHARE THE WORLD'S NATURAL RICHES. 'Within the new order founded on moral principles there is no place for those cold and selfish calculations which tend to gain a monopoly of the sources of economic life, the materials designed for the use of all,<sup>1</sup> in such a way that nations less favoured by nature remain shut out from them. In this regard, it is a great consolation to Us to see the necessity of a participation of all in the natural riches of the earth admitted even on the part of those nations which, in the fulfilment of this principle, would belong to the category of "those who give," and not that of "those who receive." It is, however, in conformity with equity that a solution of a question so vital to world economy should be reached methodically and in easy stages, with necessary guarantees, always drawing useful lessons from the omissions and mistakes of the past. If, in the future peace, this point were not to be courageously dealt with, there would remain in the relations between the peoples a deep and far-reaching root to blossom forth in bitter dissensions, and burning jealousies, which would lead eventually to new conflicts. It must, however, be noticed how closely the satisfactory solution of this problem is connected with another cardinal point of the new order of which We shall speak in the next section.'

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the address *La Sollelnita della Pentecoste*, *supra*, pp. 253-256.

IV. LIMITATION OF ARMAMENTS AND FIDELITY TO TREATIES. 'Within the limits of a new order founded on moral principles there is no place—once the more dangerous occasions of armed conflict have been got rid of—for any total war nor for any mad race of armaments. The calamity of a world war, with its economic and social ruin, its moral aberrations and confusion, must not be allowed for a third time to overwhelm the human race. So that mankind may be kept safely distant from such a scourge, it is necessary to move, with sincerity and honesty, towards a progressive limitation of armaments. The disproportion between exaggerated armaments among the powerful states and lack of armaments among the weaker ones creates a danger to the preservation of peace among the nations; it counsels us to place a far-reaching and proportionate limitation upon the production and the possession of weapons of offence.

'In conformity with the degree in which disarmament is brought about, means ought to be established, appropriate, honourable to all parties, and efficacious, in order to give back to the principle "Pacts must be observed" the vital, moral function that belongs to it in the juridical relations between states. This kind of principle, which in the past has experienced anxious crises and undeniable violations, has found opposed to it an almost incurable mistrust between the various nations and between their respective rulers. If mutual confidence is to be born again, institutions must arise which, meriting the respect of all, will give themselves to the noble task of guaranteeing the sincere fulfilment of treaties, and of bringing about, in accordance with the principles of law and of equity, timely corrections or revisions of treaties.

'We do not conceal the mass of difficulties to be overcome, and the all but superhuman strength of good will demanded of all parties if they are to agree and bring to a happy end the double undertaking here sketched out. But this common effort is so essential for any peace that will last, that nothing should

keep responsible statesmen from undertaking it, and from co-operating in it with a hearty good will, which, looking to the future good, will triumph over any painful recollections of attempts in the past which failed, and will not let itself be daunted by a realisation of the gigantic strength required for such a task.'

V. FREEDOM OF RELIGION. 'Within the limits of a new order founded on moral principles there is no place for the persecution of religion or of the Church. From a lively faith in a personal transcendent God there springs a sincere and unyielding moral strength which informs the whole course of life; for faith is not only a virtue—it is also the divine gate by which all virtues enter the temple of the soul and that strong tenacious character is established which does not falter before the tests of reason and of justice. This is always the case; but Faith needs to be more splendid still when there is demanded of statesmen, as of the least of citizens, the maximum of courage and moral strength to build a new Europe and a new world on the ruins which the violence of the world-war, the hatred and divisions of mankind, have piled up. As for the Social Question in particular, which, once the war is finished, will show itself more acute than ever, Our predecessors, and We too, have noted the principles its solution calls for. It is, however, necessary to bear in mind that these principles can only find an entire accomplishment and bear their fullness of fruit if statesmen and people, employers and workers, are animated by faith in a personal God, the legislator and judge, to whom they must answer for their actions. For while unbelief which arrays itself against God, the Ruler of the universe, is the most dangerous enemy of a just New Order, every man who believes in God is numbered among its powerful defenders and champions. The man who believes in Christ, in His divinity, in His law, in His work of love and brotherhood among men, will bring to the social reconstruction elements that are particu-

larly valuable. All the more precious, therefore, will be the contribution [to it] of the statesmen who show themselves ready to open wide the gates and smooth the path for the Church of Christ, so that free and unhindered, putting its supernatural energies at the service of peace and of an understanding between the nations, it may be able to co-operate, with its zeal and its love, in the immense task of healing the wounds which the war has inflicted.'

The Church's power and willingness to carry out this mission of good will to all, makes it hard to explain why there should be found states which do all they can to hinder the message of the Christian faith, though they give every liberty to whatever is hostile to that faith. These states 'withdraw youth from the beneficent influence of their Christian families and the embrace of the Church; they educate it in a spirit of opposition to Christ, instilling into youthful minds ideals, maxims, and practices that are anti-Christian; they make the Church's labour for souls difficult and throw into confusion its work of charity; they refuse to recognise and they brush aside its moral influence over individuals and over society; and all this policy, far from being mitigated or abolished during the war, has rather, in more than one respect, grown more bitter.' That any government could, in this way, add a serious anxiety of conscience to the load of worry which the war necessarily brings to its subjects is sad evidence, says Pius XII, of its hostility to the Church. The pope is a neutral in this war. Lest his action should be misconstrued he has, all through, imposed on himself the greatest reserve. His love for all the peoples is equal. But in the face of this policy, anti-Christian in its aim, he must, in the name of truth, speak out lest Catholics should fall into error.

The address ends with an eloquent and moving apostrophe of the eternal city, that Rome, the pope particularises, which is Christian, the centre and hearth of Christian charity, and

the pope sends thence a warm word of sympathy and encouragement to the whole suffering world.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pius XII to-day warns us that victory will not be the end of even the victor's troubles. Do we not know it? Did we not win the last war? and, even before the advent of Hitler, wonder into what social catastrophe we were already being drawn? The historian may once again be quoted, to illuminate the eternal papal dictum that only statesmen inspired with Christian principles can restore the world. 'If there is one reflection more than another which recurs to me at the end of these studies [on the international history of the years 1870-1914] it is the fallibility of those who specially prided themselves on their realism, that is on their capacity to measure facts and forces, regardless of sentiment, emotions, prejudice and even of what in other relations would be called justice and right and wrong. In the end it was found that the excluded sentiments and moralities had a realism of their own which was ruinous to the schemes of those who disregarded them. . . . In the end there was also a realism of right and wrong . . . it seemed as if Mr. Gladstone appealing to the Ten Commandments had had something to say for himself.' (SPENDER, *op. cit.*, 417-18, 296.)

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References are to the encyclical or address quoted as well as to the page: the abbreviations in italics denote the various documents, e.g.:

|        |                           |             |      |         |                                |             |      |
|--------|---------------------------|-------------|------|---------|--------------------------------|-------------|------|
| A.     | Arcanum                   | Leo XIII    | 1880 | L.S.    | La Sollenità della Pente-coste | Pius XII    | 1941 |
| Ac.    | Acerba Animi              | Pius XI     | 1932 | M.      | Mit Brennen-der Sorge          | Pius XI     | 1937 |
| Ad.    | Ad Beatissimi             | Benedict XV | 1914 | N.A.    | Nell' Alba                     | Pius XII    | 1941 |
| A.I.   | Amor Ille                 | id.         |      | N.A.R.  | Non Abbiamo Bisogno            | Pius XI     | 1931 |
| B.     | Benedetto II              | Pius XI     | 1930 | N.E.    | Nostus Errorem                 | Leo XIII    | 1889 |
| C.C.   | Casti Connubii            | id.         | 1930 | Nos.    | Nos Es Muy                     | Pius XI     | 1937 |
| Car.   | Caritate Christi Compulsi | id.         | 1932 | Nurses. | Address to Congress of         | id.         | 1935 |
| Con.   | Con Vivo Piacere          | id.         | 1922 | P.      | Pacem Dei Munus                | Benedict XV | 1920 |
| D.     | Diuturni                  | Benedict XV | 1919 | P.S.    | Paterna Sane Sollicitudo       | Pius XI     | 1926 |
| Dès.   | Dès le Début              | id.         | 1917 | Per.    | Pervenuti                      | Leo XIII    | 1902 |
| D.I.   | Diuturnum Illud           | Leo XIII    | 1881 | Q.      | Quadragesimo Anno              | Pius XI     | 1931 |
| D.I.M. | Divini Illius Magistri    | Pius XI     | 1929 | Q.A.M.  | Quod Apostolici Muneris        | Leo XIII    | 1878 |
| D.R.   | Divini Redemptoris        | id.         | 1937 | Q.N.    | Quando Nel Principio           | Pius XI     | 1923 |
| I.     | Iniquis Afflictisque      | id.         | 1926 | Q.P.    | Quas Primas                    | id.         | 1925 |
| I.D.   | Immortale Dei             | id.         | 1885 | R.N.    | Rerum Novarum                  | Leo XIII    | 1891 |
| Ins.   | Inscrutabili              | Leo XIII    | 1878 | S.      | Sapientiae Christianae         | id.         | 1890 |
| I.Q.G. | In Questo Giorno          | Pius XII    | 1939 | S.P.    | Summi Pontificatus             | Pius XII    | 1939 |
| L.     | Libertas Præstantissimum  | Leo XIII    | 1888 | U.      | Ubi Arcano Dei                 | Pius XI     | 1922 |

q. = quoted

## A

ABORTION, sinfulness of, C.C. 183  
*ACERBA ANIMI*, encyclical of Pius XI (1932), 140-2  
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